

William Collins

THE POEMS OF
WILLIAM COLLINS

EDITED BY

CHRISTOPHER STONE

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W. Thomas Sculpt.

CHICHESTER CROSS

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MEMOIR

THE only known portrait of William Collins represents him at the age of fourteen when he was at Winchester; and in the 'keen expressive eyes', high forehead, round cheeks, and Cupid mouth it is not hard to trace the power as well as the delicacy and fastidiousness which enabled him to write the *Persian Eclogues* three years later. If anecdotes subsequently recorded are worthy of belief, he was, even in his boyhood, conscious of the melancholy career in store for him; for a fellow-townsman and fellow-Wykehamist, Mr. William Smith of Chichester, remembered how one morning at school he had observed Collins to be particularly depressed, and when urged to disclose the cause, the boy spoke of a dream in which he walked through fields and climbed a lofty tree; when he had nearly reached the top a great branch broke and let him fall to the ground. The account of this simple dream caused much ridicule, till Collins explained that the tree was the Tree of Poetry. 'The first time that Mr. Smith saw him after they had left the College was at an interval of twelve or fifteen years, and when, in a deplorable state of mind, he had been long under confinement; but no sooner

had his old schoolfellow on this occasion presented himself, than he exclaimed, "Smith, do you remember my dream?"' Thus it sometimes happens that a trifling apprehension may be terribly confirmed, and may exercise a lasting impression on the mind that framed it.

The materials for a memoir of Collins are very scanty: a few letters written by his friends after his death; Dr. Johnson's 'Life', first published in Fawkes' and Woty's *Poetical Calendar* and rewritten for the *Lives of the Poets*; one letter by Collins preserved in Seward's *Literary Anecdotes*; and many stray references in contemporary publications. To these must be added the results of the extensive and scholarly researches of editors, notably Langhorne, Dyce, Nicolas and Moy Thomas. The dearth of material is no doubt partly due to Collins's sister, with whom he lived during the last years of his life: according to her stepson she 'loved money to excess, and evinced so outrageous an aversion to her brother because he squandered or gave away to the boys in the cloisters whatever money he had, that she destroyed, in a paroxysm of resentment, all his papers, and whatever remained of his enthusiasm for poetry, as far as she could.'

William Collins was born on Christmas Day, 1721, in a house on the north side of East Street, Chichester (No. 21, 'Knight's'), possibly in the pannelled room now belonging to the Chichester Library; and he was christened in St. Andrew's Church, close at hand.



NORTH-WEST VIEW OF CHICHESTER CATHEDRAL

His father was a hatter of some repute, an alderman, more than once Mayor of the town; his mother was sister of Edmund Martin, Lieutenant-Colonel of the 8th Regiment of Foot, sometimes called the King's Own, who seems to have contributed largely to the support of the Collins family. There were two daughters, Elizabeth and Anne, the younger of whom was sixteen years older than William. He was probably sent to the Prebendal school at Chichester; and on Jan. 19, 1733, he was admitted a scholar of Winchester College, under Dr. John Burton. Here he soon began to write poetry; indeed his first poem, 'The Battle of the School-books,' was composed when he was only twelve; one line survives:

> And every Gradus flapp'd his leathern wing.

There is some doubt whether he was the Mr. William Collins whose poem on the projected marriage of Frederick Prince of Wales to the Princess Royal of Prussia was announced in the *Gentleman's Magazine* for March, 1734; the only reasons for attributing it to him are the coincidence of the name, which is sufficiently common, and the fact that the publisher, J. Roberts, afterwards published the *Persian Eclogues*.

In the *Gentleman's Magazine* for October, 1739, a trio of poems by Winchester boys, Joseph Warton, Tomkyns, and Collins, were inserted; and in an article of the following month, attributed to Dr. Johnson, they were much commended, especially

Collins's Sonnet, which was said to carry 'a Force mix'd with Tenderness, and an uncommon Elevation'.

This is remarkable criticism, when we consider the poem itself and the epithets which Johnson applied to the poet's subsequent performances. During these years at Winchester Collins is said to have also written the song, 'Young Damon of the vale is dead'; and it is certain that he had begun the *Persian Eclogues* before he left school. The idea was suggested to him by reading Salmon's *Modern History*, which contained chapters on Persia.

In 1740 Collins stood first on the list of scholars to be received in succession at New College, Oxford; but, as no vacancy occurred, he went as a commoner to Queen's College, and thence, in July, 1741, to Magdalen College, where he was elected to a demyship, possibly through the influence of his cousin William Payne, a fellow of that college. In the following January his *Persian Eclogues* were published by Roberts, and in December, 1743, Cooper published *Verses to Sir Thomas Hanmer on his Edition of Shakespeare, by a Gentleman of Oxford.*

His career at the University was not an academic triumph. His was a temperament strongly averse to any kind of routine; and his tutors no doubt regretted that a man of such ability should employ his time in writing poetry instead of essays. Perhaps too he showed signs of conceit and superciliousness. Gilbert White of Selborne, who, like Joseph Warton, was at Oriel College, said that Collins 'never looked

with complacency on his situation in the University, but was always complaining of the dulness of a college life.' His fastidious, restless, fanciful spirit chafed at a pedestrian existence. The anecdote of Hampton's descent upon a tea-party in Collins's rooms, where 'several intelligent friends were assembled . . . to enjoy each other's conversation', is most diverting. Before a word had been spoken, Hampton, a Wykehamist, and afterwards a celebrated translator of Polybius, kicked the tea-table and all its contents to the other side of the room. This is very characteristic of the attitude of the 'brutal scholar' towards 'intelligent conversations': no less characteristic was the behaviour of Collins, who 'took no notice of the aggressor, but getting up from his chair calmly, began picking up the slices of bread and butter, and the fragments of his china, repeating very mildly,

'Invenias etiam disjecti membra poetae.'

It is comforting to be assured by Gilbert White that the poet was usually of a warm temper.

He was soon quit of Oxford and its Philistinism and essays and discipline. The migration to London was ostensibly due to disgust because he did not obtain a fellowship; but really and more naturally it was owing to a desire to plunge into the great world and to escape his creditors, 'his bookseller, his tailor, and other tradesmen.' His father had died ten years earlier, leaving his affairs 'rather em-

barrassed', and just before or soon after leaving Oxford the poet lost his mother too, on July 6, 1744, and quickly dissipated the small property which she left to him. He had taken his B.A. degree in November, 1743, and the natural date for resigning his demyship would be July 16, 1744. Besides, unless the copyhold property which he inherited from his mother had been very small, he could not, while holding it, have retained his demyship for more than a short time, nor have been elected to a fellowship. So that there were many reasons why he should have decided to leave Oxford.

When he reached London he hastened to call upon his cousin Mr. George Payne, who had the management of Colonel Martin's affairs in his absence; and by a strange error of diplomacy Collins appeared in his gayest clothes with a feather in his hat; 'at which,' said Mr. Ragsdale in recounting the incident, 'his relation expressed surprise, and told him that his appearance was by no means that of a young man who had not a single guinea he could call his own. This gave him great offence; but remembering his sole dependence for subsistence was in the power of Mr. Payne, he concealed his resentment; yet could not refrain from speaking freely behind his back, and saying "he thought him a d—d dull fellow"; though, indeed, this was an epithet he was pleased to bestow on every one who did not think as he would have them.'

It is not certain in what year Collins paid a visit

to his military uncle in Flanders; but it must have been either before the summer of 1745 or between June, 1746, and June, 1747, and the visit is more likely to have taken place when Collins had just left the University and was doubtful in his choice of a profession: his earliest biographer, Dr. Langhorne, stated that it was after the failure of the Odes, in 1747. At all events he is said to have written very entertaining letters home, which are unfortunately lost; and it was probably on this occasion that his uncle thought him 'too indolent even for the army'. He had always been intended by his father for the Church; and he even went so far as to apply to Mr. Green, Rector of Birdham, near Chichester, for a curacy, and to obtain all the necessary credentials. But he was dissuaded by Hardman, a tobacconist in Fleet Street, from taking Orders.

Whatever may have been his doubts and disappointments, he was launched upon the sea of London literary life; he received, on demand, supplies of money from his cousin, Mr. Payne; he lodged with a Miss Bundy at the corner of King's Square Court in Soho, and, as Gilbert White afterwards described it, he 'commenced a man of the town, spending his time in all the dissipation of Ranelagh, Vauxhall, and the playhouses; and was romantic enough to suppose that his superior abilities would draw the attention of the great world, by means of whom he was to make his fortune. . . . He was passionately fond of

music; good-natured and affable; warm in his friendships, visionary in his pursuits; and, as long as I knew him, very temperate in his eating and drinking. He was of a moderate stature, of a light and clear complexion, with grey eyes, so very weak at times as hardly to bear a candle in the room; and often raising within him apprehensions of blindness.' One of his greatest friends was James Thomson the poet, who was then living in Kew Foot Lane, Richmond; by him Collins is said to have been introduced to the Prince of Wales. Many of his days were spent at Richmond, either with Thomson or with a neighbour, John Ragsdale, to whose house he had a general invitation; he would write fragments of poems and odes, and then burn them in the fire, in spite of his host's efforts to save them. At other times he was bent solely on the pleasures of companionship and gaiety; Ranelagh was recently opened, at Vauxhall Dr. Arne's music was a new feature of the entertainment. Collins made the acquaintance of many actors—Foote, who had been his contemporary at Oxford, and who sprang into fame in 1747, Garrick, Woodward, Quin, Murphy, and others; 'he had the liberty of the scenes and green-room, where he made diverting observations on the vanity and false consequence of that class of people; and his manner of relating them to his particular friends was extremely entertaining.' He was well known at Slaughter's in St. Martin's Lane, the resort of painters and sculptors, and at the Bedford Coffee-house 'under the Piazza, Covent Garden',

which was naturally frequented by actors from Drury Lane and a brilliant company of Bohemians. It is recorded that Dr. Arne was the only man in a suit of velvet in the dog-days. 'This Coffee-house,' said the *Connoisseur* in 1754 (No. 1.), 'is every night crowded with men of parts. Almost every one you meet is a polite scholar and a wit. Jokes and *bon mots* are echoed from box to box; every branch of literature is critically examined, and the merit of every production of the press, or performance at the theatres, weighed and determined.... We can now boast men of superior abilities [to those of Addison, Steele, and Pope]; men, who without any one acquired excellence, by the mere dint of an happy assurance, can exact the same tribute of veneration, and receive it as due to the illustrious characters, the scribblers, players, fiddlers, gamblers, that make so large a part of the company at the *Bedford*.'

With such associates Collins dissipated the money given to him by his apprehensive cousin on behalf of the Lieutenant-Colonel. We may well believe that he took his full share of the gaiety and wit, had a regular seat near Foote's select corner of the room, exchanged news with old Dr. Barrowby, an insatiable scandal-monger, discussed John Armstrong's new poem *The Art of Preserving Health* with its author, Young's *Night thoughts* or Shenstone's *Schoolmistress*, with his literary friends, Millar, Davies or Manby the publishers, or Ragsdale or Dr. Hill or Joseph Warton or Dr. Johnson. For in those days

of uncertainty, when he was living with and on his numerous friends, as one of them expressed it, Collins had made the acquaintance of the Doctor, and a friendship sprang up between them, the sincerity of which is doubly apparent in Johnson's memoir of the poet; he speaks so tenderly of him as a man, so strangely of him as a poet. The new movement in literature which Collins started was entirely alien to all Johnson's standards, and the author of *Rasselas* was grudging in his appreciation of 'oriental fictions and allegorical imagery'.

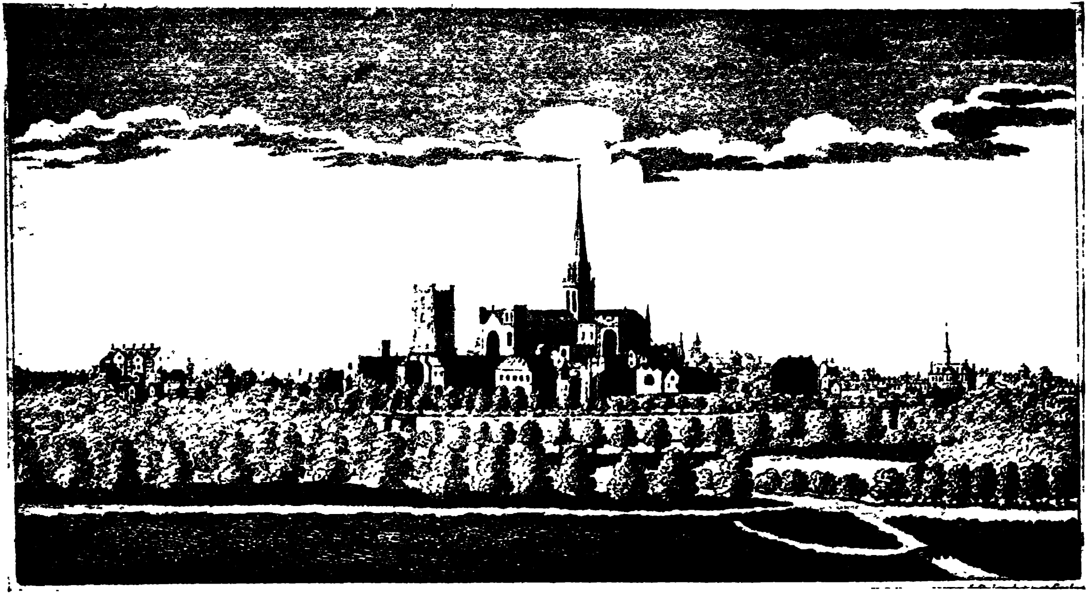
The financial situation became critical when Mr. Payne refused to continue his disbursements, and Collins was forced to set about some work. His head was full of schemes and he did not lack friends to help him. He issued proposals for his *History of the Revival of Learning*, and received some subscriptions. He meditated a translation of Aristotle; he undertook to write some Lives for Manby's *Biographia Britannica*; he even talked of writing a play for one of his theatrical friends. But these plans came to nothing, or at most to a few desultory sheets of manuscript. He tried to work, and for a while gave up his frequent visits to friends. But he lacked concentration, he could not apply himself even to congenial work for long. There is nothing astonishing in this failure; success would have been far more astonishing. He could not resist the temptation of company: 'warm in his friendships, visionary in his pursuits.' He was not a Bohemian, but he lived in

Bohemian circles. Johnson found him one day 'immured by a bailiff, that was prowling in the street'. Though there was no *Vicar of Wakefield* in manuscript with which to raise a loan, the booksellers 'on the credit of a translation of Aristotle's Poetics, advanced as much money as enabled him to escape into the country'. 'He showed me the guineas safe in his hand', adds the Doctor with satisfaction.

Another anecdote, probably of an earlier date, must be mentioned. Joseph Warton met Collins at Guildford races, and took him home to Milford. 'I wrote out for him my odes,' Warton wrote to his young brother Tom, 'and he likewise communicated some of his to me; and being both in very high spirits we took courage, and resolved to join forces, and to publish them immediately. . . . Collins is not to publish the odes unless he gets ten guineas for them.' This scheme fell through, and in 1746, a few months later, Dodsley published in his *Museum* Collins's *Ode on the Death of Colonel Ross* and 'How sleep the brave.' At the end of the year Millar published his *Odes on several Descriptive and Allegoric Subjects*, and at the same time Dodsley published Warton's Odes. The result justified Dodsley's caution in refusing the combined forces: Warton's Odes reached a second edition, while only a few of Collins's thousand copies went out into the world. It is interesting to see what impression, at first glance, they made upon Thomas Gray, who wrote to Dr. Wharton from Cambridge on Dec. 27

(the previous day was his thirtieth birthday): 'Have you seen the Works of two young Authors, a M[r] Warton & a M[r] Collins, both Writers of Odes? It is odd enough, but each is the half of a considerable Man, & one the counterpart of the other. The first has but little Invention, very poetical choice of Expression, & a good Ear; the second, a fine fancy, model'd upon the Antique, a bad Ear, great Variety of Words, & Images with no Choice at all. They both deserve to last some years, but will not.'

The Odes must have been published just before Collins's twenty-fifth birthday, and they fell like lead upon a leaden world. It is not hard to imagine the irritation which, in later years, caused him to buy up all the remaining copies and to burn them. It must have been a severe blow, emphasized by the success which attended the two Wartons in all their ventures. Dr. Langhorne, in his memoir, said: 'It is observable that none of his poems bears the marks of an amorous disposition, and he is one of those few poets, who have sailed to *Delphi* without touching at *Cythera*.' If Thomas Warton is to be trusted, the lady on whom Collins set his affections was a Miss Elizabeth Goddard, who lived or stayed at Harting, near Chichester. Her heart, however, was given to Colonel Ross, and Collins had the melancholy satisfaction of writing an ode on the death of her lover, killed in the action of Fontenoy. She was a day older than Collins, and he said once 'that he came into the world a day after the *fair*'.



J. Roland del. et sculp.

THE SOUTH-WEST VIEW OF CHICHESTER

His uncle, Lieutenant-Colonel Martin, who had been in command of his regiment since 1745, was wounded at the battle of Val in Flanders on July 1, 1747, and came home to live at Chichester with his nieces. The elder, Elizabeth, was still unmarried: but Anne Collins may have been married to Captain Hugh Sempill at this date. No doubt Collins paid many visits to his invalid uncle, may indeed have collected his interesting library at Chichester during these years. But there can be no doubt that after the failure of his Odes he endured the extremities of anxiety and want in London. Such troubles as that recorded by Johnson and the obligation to fulfil promises made to booksellers threw the sensitive poet into fits of acute depression; the shadows deepened, and the death of Thomson, in August, 1748, removed his closest friend.

In the following June Collins published his Ode on the death of Thomson. But before this, on April 26, Lieutenant-Colonel Martin had died at Chichester; a tablet to his memory is in St. Andrew's Church. By his will, proved on May 30, William Collins inherited a sum amounting to about two thousand pounds. One of his first acts was to free himself from the necessity of translating Aristotle's Poetics by repaying the loan to the publishers; another was to buy up all unsold copies of his Odes and to burn them. In this year too he stayed for a week at Winchester with Mr. Thomas Barrow, and there met Mr. John Home, to whom he addressed his famous *Ode on the*

Superstitions of the Highlands, and probably Mr. Blackstone, who told him that Dr. Hayes of Oxford had set his *Ode on the Passions* to music. In 1751 he wrote to Dr. Hayes from Chichester the only letter which has been preserved, desiring a copy of the score, for which 'I will readily answer the expence', and mentioning an *Ode on the Music of the Grecian Theatre*, which, if it was ever written, has been lost. In the meanwhile he had been in London busily engaged in his schemes, one for a *History of the Revival of Learning*, another for a review to be called the *Clarendon Review* and to be printed at the Oxford University Press. His elder sister Elizabeth married Lieut. Nathaniel Tanner in October, 1750, and no doubt Collins often went to Chichester to stay with Mrs. Sempill, who had removed to a house in the Cloisters, now belonging to Dr. Read. It is a fine proof of his character that the release from pecuniary anxieties should have been accompanied not by a period of indolence and dissipation, but by an access of energy which prompted him to undertake the most voluminous work that he ever contemplated. Whether he would ever have accomplished his History may be doubted; but in the spring of 1751, not long after he had written to Dr. Hayes in terms of enthusiasm and cheerfulness, he fell seriously ill in London, thought he was dying, and sent for Thomas Warton, then a young tutor at Trinity College, Oxford, to take his last leave of him. However, he recovered from his malady and went to

Chichester in the summer: perhaps it was then that he wrote his only recorded humorous lines, on a quack doctor.

> Seventh son of Doctor John,
> Physician and Chirurgeon,
> Who hath travelled wide and far,
> Man-Midwife to a Man of War,
> In Chichester hath ta'en a house,
> Hippocrates, Hippocratous.

But Collins was left with a deep sense of his mental danger; he was paying the penalty for years of alternate privation and dissipation, and though his friends were totally unconscious of his precarious condition, he was preyed upon by the terrors of melancholia. To escape from the disease and to find relief in travel and change of scenery, he went to France and afterwards to Bath. The history of these three years is hidden. Collins seems to have fled from his old friends and the old life in a frantic attempt to bury his troubles and to regain his health in lively companies where he was a stranger. We know nothing of his acquaintances in France or at Bath, of his mental tortures, of the struggle against the serpent melancholy. Johnson saw him at Islington, where Mrs. Sempill met him on his return from France. 'There was then nothing of disorder discernible in his mind by any but himself; but he had withdrawn from study, and travelled with no other book than an English Testament such as children

carry to the school: when his friend took it into his hand, out of curiosity to see what companion a man of letters had chosen, "I have but one book," said Collins, "but that is the best."'

As a last expedient the poet went back to Oxford and took lodgings opposite Christ Church. He hoped that the change of air and the subdued activity of the University life would alleviate his depression and rescue him from his morbid meditations. Tom Warton, then about twenty-six years old and busy with the last touches to his edition of the *Faery Queen*, was a don at Trinity and saw much of Collins. The poor man even managed to crawl as far as Trinity with the support of a man-servant, but all through the month that he was in Oxford he was 'so weak and low that he could not bear conversation'. Another friend, Gilbert White, was in Oxford at the same time; he had lost sight of Collins since he left London, but he was much affected to see him on this occasion under Merton wall, 'struggling, and conveyed by force, in the arms of two or three men, towards the parish of St. Clement, in which was a house that took in such unhappy objects.' Collins was soon removed to McDonald's mad-house in Chelsea, and thence to Chichester, where he lived with his sister Mrs. Sempill till his death, nearly five years later.

His visit to Oxford was probably early in 1754. On March 8th Dr. Johnson, in a letter to Joseph Warton, said:—'How little can we venture to exult

in any intellectual powers or literary attainments, when we consider the condition of poor Collins. I knew him a few years ago, full of hopes and full of projects, versed in many languages, high in fancy, and strong in retention. This busy and forcible mind is now under the government of those who lately would not have been able to comprehend the least and most narrow of its designs. What do you hear of him? are there hopes of recovery? or is he to pass the remainder of his life in misery and degradation? perhaps with complete consciousness of his calamity.' This was indeed the most terrible feature of his disease, the knowledge, in his lucid intervals, that he was an object of pity and care to his friends. Bliss-ful ignorance of his circumstances was denied to him, and his sister was perhaps not a very considerate guardian. In September, soon after his removal to her care, he was visited by the two Wartons, his faithful and prosperous friends. He was in high spirits on the first day, talked of his *Persian Eclogues* with disparagement, calling them his 'Irish Eclogues'; showed to the Wartons a fair copy of his *Ode to Mr. John Home* and a short *Ode on the Bells of Arragon*; but over-exerted himself and was unable to see them on the next day. Joseph Warton probably wrote to Dr. Johnson about this visit: for on Christmas Eve the Doctor, in a letter to him, said:—'Poor dear Collins! Let me know whether you think it would give him pleasure if I should write to him. I have often been near his state, and therefore have it in

great commiseration.' Again, on April 15, 1756:—'What becomes of poor Collins; I wrote to him a letter which he never answered. I suppose writing is very troublesome to him. That man is no common loss. The moralists all talk of the uncertainty of fortune, and the transitoriness of beauty; but it is yet more dreadful to consider that the powers of the mind are equally liable to change, that understanding may make its appearance and depart, that it may blaze and expire.'

In his memoir of Collins, written in 1763, Johnson states that the poet died in 1756; Gilbert White and John Ragsdale appear to have been equally ignorant of the exact date of his death; but Oliver Goldsmith, who can hardly have known him, wrote in his *Enquiry into the State of Learning* (p. 107) in 1759:—'The neglected author of the *Persian Eclogues*, which, however inaccurate, excell any in our language, is still alive: happy if, insensible of our neglect, not raging at our ingratitude.' It is hard to refrain from rage at this neglect and ingratitude; even if Collins had been a confirmed lunatic in an asylum, it might be expected that his old friends would have visited him occasionally. Perhaps they did; or perhaps Mrs. Sempill discouraged interference with her charge. At any rate no records remain. Collins frequently rallied from his disorder, and in these intervals he managed to finish 'a Preliminary Dissertation to be prefixed to his *History of the Restoration of Learning* . . . written

with great judgement, precision and knowledge of the subject' (Thomas Warton). Also he may have altered and polished his various poems; the *Eclogues* were published again in 1757 by Payne under the title of *Oriental Eclogues*, but there is some slight reason for doubting whether the author superintended the corrections; and when Langhorne edited his poems in 1765 he obtained a much-altered version of the *Epistle to Sir Thomas Hanmer*. But owing to the disastrous wrath of Mrs. Sempill, which led her to destroy all her brother's papers, the evidence on these and on many other points is unfortunately obscure.

Collins never lost his love of the Bible. Thomas Warton recorded an anecdote furnished to him by Mr. Shenton, the Vicar of St. Andrew's, by whom the poet was buried. 'Walking in my vicarial garden one Sunday evening during Collins's last illness, I heard a female (the servant, I suppose,) reading the Bible in his chamber. Mr. Collins had been accustomed to rave much, and make great moanings; but while she was reading, or rather attempting to read, he was not only silent but attentive likewise, correcting her mistakes, which indeed were very frequent, through the whole of the twenty-seventh chapter of Genesis.'

He died on the twelfth of June, 1759, and was buried three days later in St. Andrew's Church. After the lapse of thirty-six years, when his genius had come to due recognition in the light of the

romantic movement heralded by his Odes, a monument to his memory, the work of Flaxman, was erected in the Cathedral by public subscription.

'Such was the fate of Collins, with whom I once delighted to converse, and whom I yet remember with tenderness,' wrote Dr. Johnson: and he could hardly have expressed in more fitting words the emotion which the death of the poet must have roused in the hearts of his friends. To him and to Mr. Ragsdale we owe nearly all the information which admits us to a knowledge of Collins as a man. There is a slight, an almost indefinable, want of sincerity, a certain heartlessness, in the letters of Gilbert White and Thomas Warton. But we feel that Johnson loved him even if he was puzzled by his poems; and Mr. John Ragsdale, if we may judge from his letter to Mr. Hymers, was an admirable friend. In his extremely human reminiscences he shows Collins as a man, and as a man capable of writing the Odes. There was nothing peculiar in his love of company and of good food; nor in his attitude of a rather deprecating spectator; nor in his sense of the vanity of the theatrical life and the gay world, a world where he nevertheless passed his time 'in all the dissipation of Ranelagh, Vauxhall, and the playhouses'. His was simply the artistic temperament; these doings were the natural complement of the intellectual life. Dr. Johnson has borne witness to the purity of his morals and the piety of his opinions, and has declared that, in spite

of the temptations of poverty and of fortuitous companions, 'he preserved the source of action unpolluted, that his principles were never shaken, that his distinctions of right and wrong were never confounded, and that his faults had nothing of malignity or design, but proceeded from some unexpected pressure or casual temptation.' This is high testimony indeed; and is even truer of his poetry than of his life. His tastes were refined and fastidious; he had a good library at Chichester and was especially fond of the Old English drama, and of black-letter reading. He was a fine classical scholar, acquainted with the Italian, French, and Spanish languages; 'passionately fond of music'; an entertaining letter-writer; and above all a dreamer. From the *Persian Eclogues* to the *Ode on the Superstitions of the Highlands* his poems manifest the vigorous and romantic imagination of the forerunner of Wordsworth and Coleridge. He was a link in the literary tradition of the century. His voice sounded in the deep silence which followed Pope's death in 1744; it was solitary and in many ways not intelligible to his generation. But afterwards when Joseph Warton had published his *Essay on Pope* and Thomas Warton his *History of English Poetry*, the underlying principles of Collins's poetry were more clearly understood. The three friends were all engaged in the same crusade, but Collins alone had the true poetic gift; and his fame after his death fitly exceeded that of the Wartons. Coleridge is said to have 'fed him-

self upon Collins', and Wordsworth's beautiful lines to his memory are well known.

Wilmott spoke of Akenside, Collins, Gray, and Thomas Warton as examples of a kind of poetry of which 'the principle is two-fold: embracing—(1) The construction of a language differing from that of society; and (2) The decoration and arrangement of it, according to the laws of design and colour'. This is especially true of Collins, who was more successful than Gray in his handling of the principle; being gifted with a richer and more fantastic imagination, and making his effects more impersonally than the author of the *Elegy*. He will never appeal to the heart of his reader with the poignancy which Gray laboured to achieve; but among poets and those by whom the more subtle aspects of art are appreciated, he will hold a more distinguished and dignified position. We know that he was perpetually altering his epithets; his manuscripts were a mass of corrections and interlineations. Never in all his life, through the years when he was tempted by poverty to write for gain, is there any evidence that he lost sight of his artistic principles; that he ever wrote anything but his best, or was ever satisfied even by his best. It is no wonder that, as one of his biographers has said, 'from the very beginning of his career Collins was an object of sympathy instead of censure.'

It is customary for the panegyrists of Collins to reprobate in the strongest terms the strictures which

Johnson, Hazlitt, and other critics passed upon his poems. But admiration may be carried to a blind excess; and while it is fair to say that with every fresh study of the poems new beauties, new and exquisite details come to light, it is also impossible to deny that comparative roughnesses and obscurities are discernible, and that Collins was not so spiritual and exalted a poet as to disdain the treasure-houses of his predecessors and contemporaries. 'Genius borrows nobly.' Collins was instinct with the thought and movement of his time; and though it is true that he was a pioneer, his chief merit lies, or rather his merit is most easily observable, in the immeasurable superiority of his work to the endless odes and discursive poems which throng the pages of Dodsley's *Museum*, *Collection*, and other contemporary miscellanies. The delicate sweetness and wonderful technique of his *Ode to Evening* are indeed qualities which render it immortal; but it is important to contrast it with the poems of Joseph and Thomas Warton, Gray, and Henley, on the same theme. There is a relative as well as an absolute value in his work; and though Collins has his place in the company of poets by reason of that divine fire which is their heritage, he moves in a peculiarly interesting stage of literary history, the circumstances of which must be remembered in the severer contemplation of the critic.

In a world of tinsel and artifice, of fine clothes and shallow sentiment, he moved, a melancholy figure, by

the very gaiety and carelessness of his early manhood striking a note of deeper tragedy; 'a wise and vertuous man,' upon whom the fate which Johnson dreaded for himself descended with slow relentless force.

> Yet lives there one whose heedless eye
>   Shall scorn thy pale shrine glimmering near!
> With him, sweet Bard, may Fancy die,
>   And Joy desert the blooming year.

What Collins did for Thomson, Wordsworth did for Collins in the lines composed upon the Thames near Richmond.

> Glide gently, thus for ever glide,
> O Thames! that other bards may see
> As lovely visions by thy side
> As now, fair river! come to me.
> O glide, fair stream! for ever so,
> Thy quiet soul on all bestowing,
> Till all our minds for ever flow
> As thy deep waters now are flowing.
>
> Vain thought!—Yet be as now thou art,
> That in thy waters may be seen
> The image of a poet's heart,
> How bright, how solemn, how serene!
> Such as did once the Poet bless,
> Who murmuring here a later ditty,
> Could find no refuge from distress,
> But in the milder grief of pity.

Now let us, as we float along,
For *him* suspend the dashing oar;
And pray that never child of song
May know the Poet's sorrows more.
How calm! how still! the only sound,
The dripping of the oar suspended!
—The evening darkness gathers round
By virtue's holiest Powers attended.

NOTE

The text of Collins's poems involves several problems which are intricate in their details but of no great importance except to specialists. The differences between the first and second editions of the *Eclogues* are negligible; the text here printed is of the first edition, called the *Persian Eclogues*, for the use of which I am indebted to Mr. Buxton Forman, the lucky possessor of one of the very few copies in existence. The second edition, published in 1757, when Collins was mad, contains two new lines in the third eclogue and corrections of a few inconsistencies of language. The Odes are here printed according to the only authoritative edition of 1746, but the main variations in the Dodsley versions of the *Ode on the Death of Colonel Ross* and the *Ode to Evening* are noticed. The question of their authenticity is crepuscular and may be studied in the editions of Dyce or Moy Thomas. The *Verses to Sir Thomas Hanmer* are reprinted from the 1743 edition, though Langhorne, in 1765, published another version which is generally accepted as genuine. The *Ode on the Popular Superstitions of the Highlands* is reprinted from the *Transactions* of the Royal Society of Edinburgh, 1788, with the omission of all matter confessedly added by the editor, Dr. Carlyle, and Mr. Henry Mackenzie. The text, as it stands, follows

the rough copy of the poem which Collins gave to Mr. Home; a few manuscript corrections will be found in the footnotes. The London edition of 1788, professing to be a perfect copy of the Ode, is now discredited by all intelligent critics; Mr. Swinburne, for instance, speaks of the 'magnificent Highland ode, so villainously defaced after his death by the most impudent interpolations on record'. Of the shorter poems, the Ode on the death of Thomson is reprinted from Mr. Bolton Corney's edition of Thomson (1842), where the text is taken from Mr. Dyce's copy of the original edition (London, Manby, 1749). The text of the *Dirge in Cymbeline* is from Langhorne's edition, since the first version, in the *Gentleman's Magazine*, is known to have been altered by the editor; the lines, 'Ye curious hands that hid from vulgar eyes,' from Pearch's *Collection* (1763), where they first appeared; the Song, 'Young Damon of the vale is dead,' from Langhorne's edition; and the Sonnet, 'When Phoebe form'd a wanton smile,' from the *Gentleman's Magazine* (Oct. 1739). This is the first edition of Collins's poems from which the *Lines to Miss Aurelia C——r* have been omitted, Mr. G. Birkbeck Hill having proved that they were erroneously ascribed to Collins by Dr. Johnson. (Dr. Johnson's *Letters*, ii. 130.)

It will be seen that where a choice of texts has arisen, that which was undoubtedly sanctioned by Collins himself has been printed; and all the footnotes, unless otherwise stated, are from the original

editions. The portrait of Collins is from the Pickering edition of 1830.

In an appendix will be found five letters: one from Collins to Dr. Hayes of Oxford, the other four the main documents from which this account of the poet has been extracted. Besides these and Dr. Johnson's memoir, the chief sources for information and references are Sir Leslie Stephen's article in the *Dictionary of National Biography*, and the various editions of Collins, especially those of Langhorne, Crowe, Dyce, Sir Harris Nicolas, Moy Thomas, and Willmott. I am deeply indebted to Mr. Buxton Forman for the privilege of using his copy of the *Persian Eclogues*; and to Prebendary Cecil Deedes, of Chichester, and the Reverend H. A. Wilson, of Magdalen College, for information concerning the early life of the poet.

LIST OF THE CHIEF EDITIONS OF THE WORKS OF COLLINS

1. *Persian Eclogues.* London, Roberts, 1742.
2. *Verses humbly addressed to Sir Thomas Hanmer on his edition of Shakespeare's Works,* by a gentleman of Oxford. London, Cooper, 1743.
3. *Odes on several Descriptive and Allegoric Subjects,* by William Collins. London, Millar, 1747.
4. *An Ode occasioned by the death of Mr. Thomson,* by William Collins. London, Manby, 1749.
5. *Oriental Eclogues.* London, Payne, 1757.
6. *The Poetical Works of Mr. William Collins,* with Memoirs of the Author; and Observations on his genius and writings, by J. Langhorne. London, Becket and Dehondt, 1765.
7. *Poetical Works.* Glasgow, Foulis, 1787.
8. *An Ode on the Popular Superstitions of the Highlands of Scotland, etc.* London, Bell, 1788.
   [The spurious edition. This Ode first appeared in the *Transactions* of the Royal Society of Edinburgh, 1788.]
9. *Poetical Works,* edited by Mrs. Barbauld. London, Cadell and Davies, 1794.
10. *Poetical Works.* Colchester, Keymer, 1796.
11. *Poetical Works,* enriched with elegant engravings. London, 1798.
12. *Poetical Works* (Langhorne's Commentary, Johnson's 'Life'; engravings from designs by Westall). London, Sharpe, 1804.
13. *Poetical Works,* edited by the Rev. Alexander Dyce. London, Pickering, 1827.

14. *Poems*, edited by W. Crowe. Bath, 1828.
15. *Poems*, with Memoir (by Sir Harris Nicolas), and Essay by Sir Egerton Brydges. (Aldine Poets.) London, Pickering, 1830.
16. *Poems*, with Memoir, by Moy Thomas. London, 1858.

This list is not intended to be complete. The collected works of Collins have been printed in the British Poets of Johnson, Bell, Anderson, Park, Chalmers, &c. Separate poems appeared in the *Gentleman's Magazine*, Dodsley's *Museum* and *Collection*, Fawkes's and Woty's *Poetical Calendar*, Pearch's *Collection*, *The Union*, &c. The Odes and Songs, with the exception of the *Ode to Liberty*, were translated into Italian by G. B. Martelli, Piacenza, 1814.

POEMS OF WILLIAM COLLINS

SONNET

When *Phœbe* form'd a wanton smile,
My soul! it reach'd not here!
Strange, that thy peace, thou trembler, flies
Before a rising tear!

From midst the drops, my love is born,
That o'er those eyelids rove:
Thus issued from a teeming wave
The fabled queen of love.

Delicatulus.

SONG

THE SENTIMENTS BORROWED FROM SHAKESPEARE

Young Damon of the vale is dead,
Ye lowly hamlets, moan;
A dewy turf lies o'er his head,
And at his feet a stone.

His shroud, which Death's cold damps destroy,
Of snow-white threads was made:
All mourn'd to see so sweet a boy
In earth for ever laid.

Pale pansies o'er his corpse were placed,
Which, pluck'd before their time,
Bestrew'd the boy, like him to waste
And wither in their prime.

But will he ne'er return, whose tongue
Could tune the rural lay?
Ah, no! his bell of peace is rung,
His lips are cold as clay.

They bore him out at twilight hour,
The youth who loved so well:
Ah, me! how many a true-love shower
Of kind remembrance fell!

Each maid was woe—but Lucy chief,
Her grief o'er all was tried;
Within his grave she dropp'd in grief,
And o'er her loved one died.

PERSIAN
ECLOGUES.

Written originally for the

ENTERTAINMENT

OF THE

Ladies of *TAURIS*.

And now firſt tranſlated, &c.

Quod ſi non hìc tantas fructus oſtenderetur, & ſi ex his ſtudiis delectatis ſola peteretur; tamen, ut opinor, hanc animi remiſſionem humaniſſimam ac liberaliſſimam judicaretis.

Cic. pro Arch. Poeta.

LONDON:

Printed for J. Roberts, in *Warwick-Lane.* 1742.

(Price Six-pence.)

THE

PREFACE.

It is with the Writings of Mankind, in some Measure, as with their Complexions or their Dress, each Nation hath a Peculiarity in all these, to distinguish it from the rest of the World.

The Gravity of the *Spaniard*, and the Levity of the *Frenchman*, are as evident in all their Productions as in their Persons themselves; and the Stile of my Countrymen is as naturally Strong and Nervous, as that of an *Arabian* or *Persian* is rich and figurative.

There is an Elegancy and Wildness of Thought which recommends all their Compositions; and our Genius's are as much too cold for the Entertainment of such Sentiments, as our Climate is for their Fruits and Spices. If any of these Beauties are to be found in the following *Eclogues*, I hope my Reader will consider them as an Argument of their being Original. I received them at the Hands of a Merchant, who had made it his Business to enrich himself with the Learning, as well as the Silks and Carpets of the *Persians*. The little Information I could gather concerning their Author, was, That his Name was *Mahamed*, and that he was a Native of *Tauris*.

It was in that City that he died of a Distemper fatal in those Parts, whilst he was engag'd in celebrating the Victories of his favourite Monarch, *the great Abbas*. As to the *Eclogues* themselves, they give a very just View of the Miseries, and

Inconveniences, as well as the Felicities that attend one of the finest Countries in the East.

The Time of the Writing them was probably in the Beginning of *Sha Sultan Hosseyn*'s Reign, the Successor of *Sefi* or *Solyman* the Second.

Whatever Defects, as, I doubt not, there will be many, fall under the Reader's Observation, I hope his Candour will incline him to make the following Reflections:

That the Works of *Orientals* contain many Peculiarities, and that thro' Defect of Language few *European* Translators can do them Justice.

ECLOGUE THE FIRST.

SELIM; OR, THE SHEPHERD'S MORAL.

Scene, A valley near Bagdat.

Time, The morning.

Ye *Persian* Maids, attend your Poet's Lays,
And hear how Shepherds pass their golden Days:
Not all are blest, whom Fortune's Hand sustains
With Wealth in Courts, nor all that haunt the Plains:
Well may your Hearts believe the Truths I tell,
'Tis Virtue makes the Bliss, where'er we dwell.

Thus *Selim* sung by sacred Truth inspir'd;
No Praise the Youth, but her's alone desir'd:
Wise in himself, his meaning Songs convey'd
Informing Morals to the Shepherd Maid;
Or taught the Swains that surest Bliss to find,
What Groves nor Streams bestow, a virtuous Mind.

When sweet and od'rous, like an Eastern Bride,
The radiant Morn resum'd her orient Pride,
When wanton Gales, along the Valleys play,
Breathe on each Flow'r, and bear their Sweets away;
By *Tigris'* Wand'rer Waves he sate, and sung
This useful Lesson for the Fair and Young.

Ye *Persian* Dames, he said, to ye belong,
Well may they please, the Morals of my Song:
No fairer Maids, I trust, than ye are found,
Grac'd with soft Arts, the peopled World around!
The Morn that lights you, to your Loves supplies
Each gentler Ray delicious to your Eyes:

For ye those Flow'rs her fragrant Hands bestow,
And yours the Love that Kings delight to know.
Yet think not these, all beauteous as they are,
The best kind Blessings Heav'n can grant the Fair!
Who trust alone in Beauty's feeble Ray,
* *Balsora*'s Pearls have more of Worth, than they;
Drawn from the Deep, they sparkle to the Sight,
And all-unconscious shoot a lust'rous Light:
Such are the Maids, and such the Charms they boast,
By Sense unaided, or to Virtue lost.
Self-flattering Sex! your Hearts believe in vain
That Love shall blind, when once he fires the Swain;
Or hope a Lover by your Faults to win,
As Spots on Ermin beautify the Skin:
Who seeks secure to rule, be first her Care
Each softer Virtue that adorns the Fair,
Each tender Passion Man delights to find,
The lov'd Perfections of a female Mind.

Blest were the Days, when Wisdom held her Reign,
And Shepherds sought her on the silent Plain,
With Truth she wedded in the secret Grove,
The fair-eyed Truth, and Daughters bless'd their Love.

O haste, fair Maids, ye Virtues come away,
Sweet Peace and Plenty lead you on your way!
The balmy Shrub, for ye shall love our Shore,
By *Ind* excell'd or *Araby* no more.

Lost to our Fields, for so the Fates ordain,
The dear Deserters shall return again.
O come, thou Modesty, as they decree,
The Rose may then improve her Blush by Thee.
Here make thy Court amidst our rural Scene,
And Shepherd-Girls shall own Thee for their Queen.

* The Gulph of that Name, famous for the Pearl-fishery.

With Thee be Chastity, of all afraid,
Distrusting all, a wise suspicious Maid;
But Man the most; not more the Mountain Doe
Holds the swift Falcon for her deadly Foe.
Cold is her Breast, like Flow'rs that drink the Dew,
A silken Veil conceals her from the View.
No wild Desires amidst thy Train be known,
But Faith, whose Heart is fix'd on one alone:
Desponding Meekness, with her down-cast Eyes,
And friendly Pity, full of tender Sighs;
And Love the last: By these your Hearts approve,
These are the Virtues that must lead to Love.

Thus sung the Swain, and Eastern Legends say,
The maids of *Bagdat* verify'd the Lay:
Dear to the Plains, the Virtues came along,
The Shepherds lov'd, and *Selim* bless'd his Song.

THE END OF THE FIRST ECLOGUE.

ECLOGUE THE SECOND.

HASSAN; OR, THE CAMEL DRIVER.

SCENE, The desart.

TIME, Mid-day.

IN silent Horror o'er the Desart-Waste
The Driver *Hassan* with his Camels past.
One Cruise of Water on his Back he bore,
And his light Scrip contain'd a scanty Store;
A Fan of painted Feathers in his Hand,
To guard his shaded Face from scorching Sand.
The sultry Sun had gain'd the middle Sky,
And not a Tree, and not an Herb was nigh.
The Beasts, with Pain, their dusty Way pursue,
Shrill roar'd the Winds, and dreary was the View!
With desp'rate Sorrow wild th' affrighted Man
Thrice sigh'd, thrice strook his Breast, and thus began:
Sad was the Hour, and luckless was the Day,
When first from Schiraz' *Walls I bent my Way.*

Ah! little thought I of the blasting Wind,
The Thirst or pinching Hunger that I find!
Bethink thee, *Hassan*, where shall Thirst assuage,
When fails this Cruise, his unrelenting Rage?
Soon shall this Scrip its precious Load resign;
Then what but Tears and Hunger shall be thine?

Ye mute Companions of my Toils, that bear
In all my Griefs a more than equal Share!
Here, where no Springs, in Murmurs break away,
Or Moss-crown'd Fountains mitigate the Day:

In vain ye hope the green Delights to know,
Which Plains more blest, or verdant Vales bestow:
Here Rocks alone, and tasteless Sands are found,
And faint and sickly Winds for ever howl around.
Sad was the Hour, &c.

Curst be the Gold and Silver which persuade
Weak Men to follow far-fatiguing Trade.
The Lilly-Peace outshines the silver Store,
And Life is dearer than the golden Ore.
Yet Money tempts us o'er the Desart brown,
To ev'ry distant Mart, and wealthy Town:
Full oft we tempt the Land, and oft the Sea,
And are we only yet repay'd by Thee?
Ah! why was Ruin so attractive made,
Or why fond Man so easily betray'd?
Why heed we not, whilst mad we haste along,
The gentle Voice of Peace, or Pleasure's Song?
Or wherefore think the flow'ry Mountain's Side,
The Fountain's Murmurs, and the Valley's Pride,
Why think we these less pleasing to behold,
Than dreary Desarts, if they lead to Gold?
Sad was the Hour, &c.

O cease, my Fears! all frantic as I go,
When Thought creates unnumber'd Scenes of Woe,
What if the Lion in his Rage I meet!
Oft in the Dust I view his printed Feet:
And fearful! oft, when Day's declining Light
Yields her pale Empire to the Mourner Night,
By Hunger rous'd, he scours the groaning Plain,
Gaunt Wolves and sullen Tygers in his Train:
Before them Death with Shrieks directs their Way,
Fills the wild Yell, and leads them to their Prey.
Sad was the Hour, &c.

At that dead Hour the silent Asp shall creep,
If ought of rest I find, upon my Sleep:
Or some swoln Serpent twist his Scales around,
And wake to Anguish with a burning Wound.
Thrice happy they, the wise contented Poor,
From Lust of Wealth, and Dread of Death secure;
They tempt no Desarts, and no Griefs they find;
Peace rules the Day, where Reason rules the Mind.
Sad was the Hour, &c.

O hapless Youth! for she thy Love hath won,
The tender *Zara*, will be most undone!
Big swell'd my Heart, and own'd the pow'rful Maid,
When fast she dropt her Tears, as thus she said:
"Farewel the Youth whom Sighs could not detain,
"Whom *Zara*'s breaking Heart implor'd in vain;
"Yet as thou go'st, may ev'ry Blast arise,
"Weak and unfelt as these rejected Sighs!
"Safe o'er the Wild, no Perils mayst thou see,
"No Griefs endure, nor weep, false Youth, like me."
O let me safely to the Fair return,
Say with a Kiss, she must not, shall not mourn.
Go teach my Heart, to lose its painful Fears,
Recall'd by Wisdom's Voice, and *Zara's* Tears.

He said, and call'd on Heav'n to bless the Day,
When back to *Schiraz*' Walls he bent his Way.

THE END OF THE SECOND ECLOGUE.

ECLOGUE THE THIRD.

ABRA; OR,

THE GEORGIAN SULTANA.

SCENE, A Forest.

TIME, The Evening.

IN *Georgia*'s Land, where *Tefflis*' Tow'rs are seen,
In distant View along the level Green,
While Ev'ning Dews enrich the glitt'ring Glade,
And the tall Forests cast a longer Shade,
Amidst the Maids of *Zagen*'s peaceful Grove,
Emyra sung the pleasing Cares of Love.

Of *Abra* first began the tender Strain,
Who led her Youth, with Flocks upon the Plain:
At Morn she came those willing Flocks to lead,
Where Lillies rear them in the wat'ry Mead;
From early Dawn the live-long Hours she told,
'Till late at silent Eve she penn'd the Fold.
Deep in the Grove beneath the secret Shade,
A various Wreath of od'rous Flow'rs she made:
* Gay-motley'd Pinks and sweet Junquils she chose,
The Violet-blue, that on the Moss-bank grows;
All-sweet to Sense, the flaunting Rose was there;
The finish'd Chaplet well-adorn'd her Hair.

Great *Abbas* chanc'd that fated Morn to stray,
By Love conducted from the Chace away;

* That these Flowers are found in very great Abundance in some of the Provinces of *Persia*; see the *Modern History* of the ingenious Mr. *Salmon*.

Among the vocal Vales he heard her Song,
And sought the Vales and echoing Groves among;
At length he found, and woo'd the rural Maid;
She knew the Monarch, and with Fear obey'd.
Be ev'ry Youth like Royal Abbas *mov'd,*
And ev'ry Georgian *Maid like* Abra *lov'd.*

The Royal Lover bore her from the Plain,
Yet still her Crook and bleating Flock remain:
Oft as she went, she backward turn'd her View,
And bad that Crook, and bleating Flock Adieu.
Fair happy Maid! to other Scenes remove,
To richer Scenes of golden Pow'r and Love!
Go leave the simple Pipe, and Shepherd's Strain;
With Love delight thee, and with *Abbas* reign!
Be ev'ry Youth, &c.

Yet midst the Blaze of Courts she fix'd her Love,
On the cool Fountain, or the shady Grove;
Still with the Shepherd's Innocence her Mind
To the sweet Vale, and flow'ry Mead inclin'd,
And oft as Spring renew'd the Plains with Flow'rs,
Breath'd his soft Gales, and led the fragrant Hours,
With sure Return she sought the sylvan Scene,
The breezy Mountains, and the forests Green.
Her Maids around her mov'd, a duteous Band!
Each bore a Crook all-rural in her Hand:
Some simple Lay, of Flocks and Herds they sung,
With Joy the Mountain, and the Forest rung.
Be ev'ry Youth, &c.

And oft the Royal Lover left the Care,
And Thorns of State, attendant on the Fair;
Oft to the Shades and low-roof'd Cots retir'd,
Or sought the Vale where first his Heart was fir'd;
A Russet Mantle, like a Swain, he wore,
And thought of Crowns and busy Courts no more.
Be ev'ry Youth, &c.

Blest was the Life, that Royal *Abbas* led:
Sweet was his Love, and innocent his Bed.
What if in Wealth the noble Maid excel;
The simple Shepherd Girl can love as well.
Let those who rule on *Persia's* jewell'd Throne,
Be fam'd for Love, and gentlest Love alone.
Or wreath, like *Abbas*, full of fair Renown,
The Lover's Myrtle, with the Warrior's Crown.
Oh happy Days! the Maids around her say,
Oh haste, profuse of Blessings, haste away!
Be ev'ry Youth, like Royal Abbas, *moved*;
And ev'ry Georgian *Maid, like* Abra, *lov'd.*

THE END OF THE THIRD ECLOGUE

ECLOGUE THE FOURTH.

AGIB AND SECANDER;

OR, THE FUGITIVES.

SCENE, A Mountain in Circassia.

TIME, Midnight.

IN fair *Circassia*, where, to Love inclin'd,
Each Swain was blest, for ev'ry Maid was kind!
At that still Hour, when awful Midnight reigns,
And none, but Wretches, haunt the twilight Plains;
What Time the Moon had hung her Lamp on high,
And past in Radiance thro' the cloudless Sky;
Sad o'er the Dews, two Brother Shepherds fled,
Where wild'ring Fear and desp'rate Sorrow led.
Fast as they prest their Flight, behind them lay
Wide-ravag'd Plains, and Valleys stole away.
Along the Mountain's bending Sides they ran,
Till faint and weak *Secander* thus began.

SECANDER.

O stay thee, *Agib*, for my Feet deny,
No longer friendly to my Life, to fly.
Friend of my Heart, O turn thee and survey,
Trace our sad Flight thro' all its length of Way!
And first review that long-extended Plain,
And yon wide Groves, already past with Pain!
Yon ragged Cliff, whose dang'rous Path we try'd,
And last this lofty Mountain's weary Side!

AGIB.

Weak as thou art, yet hapless must thou know
The Toils of Flight, or some severer Woe!
Still as I haste, the *Tartar* shouts behind,
And Shrieks and Sorrows load the sad'ning Wind:
In rage of Heart, with Ruin in his Hand,
He blasts our Harvests, and deforms our Land.
Yon Citron Grove, whence first in Fear we came,
Droops its fair Honours to the conqu'ring Flame:
Far fly the Swains, like us, in deep Despair,
And leave to ruffian Bands their fleecy Care.

SECANDER.

Unhappy Land, whose Blessings tempt the Sword,
In vain, unheard, thou call'st thy *Persian* Lord!
In vain, thou court'st him, helpless to thine Aid,
To shield the Shepherd, and protect the Maid,
Far off in thoughtless Indolence resign'd,
Soft Dreams of Love and Pleasure sooth his Mind:
'Midst fair *Sultanas* lost in idle Joy,
No Wars alarm him, and no Fears annoy.

AGIB.

Yet these green Hills, in Summer's sultry Heat,
Have lent the Monarch oft a cool Retreat,
Sweet to the Sight is *Zabran*'s flow'ry Plain,
And once by Maids and Shepherds lov'd in vain!
No more the Virgins shall delight to rove,
By *Sargis*' Banks or *Irwan*'s shady Grove:
On *Tarkie*'s Mountain catch the cooling Gale,
Or breathe the Sweets of *Aly*'s flow'ry Vale:
Fair Scenes! but ah no more with Peace possest,
With Ease alluring, and with Plenty blest.
No more the Shepherds whit'ning Seats appear,
Nor the kind Products of a bounteous Year;

No more the Dale, with snowy Blossoms crown'd.
But Ruin spreads her baleful Fires around.

SECANDER.

In vain *Circassia* boasts her spicy Groves,
For ever fam'd for pure and happy Loves:
In vain she boasts her fairest of the Fair,
Their Eyes' blue languish, and their golden Hair!
Those Eyes in Tears, their fruitless Grief must send,
Those Hairs the *Tartar*'s cruel Hand shall rend.

AGIB.

Ye *Georgian* Swains that piteous learn from far
Circassia's Ruin, and the Waste of War;
Some weightier Arms than Crooks and Staves prepare,
To shield your Harvests, and defend your Fair:
The *Turk* and *Tartar* like Designs pursue,
Fix'd to destroy, and stedfast to undo.
Wild as his Land, in native Deserts bred,
By Lust incited, or by Malice led,
The Villain-*Arab*, as he prowls for Prey,
Oft marks with Blood and wasting Flames the Way;
Yet none so cruel as the *Tartar* Foe,
To Death inur'd, and nurst in Scenes of Woe.

He said, when loud along the Vale was heard
A shriller Shriek, and nearer Fires appear'd:
Th' affrighted Shepherds thro' the Dews of Night,
Wide o'er the Moon-light Hills, renew'd their Flight.

THE END OF THE FOURTH AND LAST ECLOGUE.

VERSES

HUMBLY ADDRESS'D

TO

SIR THOMAS HANMER

ON HIS EDITION OF

SHAKESPEAR'S WORKS.

By a GENTLEMAN *of* *OXFORD.*

LONDON:

Printed for M. COOPER, in *Pater-Noster-Row*. 1743.

(Price Six Pence.)

To

SIR THOMAS HANMER.

SIR,

WHILE, own'd by You, with Smiles the Muse surveys
Th' expected Triumph of her sweetest Lays:
While, stretch'd at Ease, she boasts your Guardian
Aid,
Secure, and happy in her sylvan Shade:
Excuse her Fears, who scarce a Verse bestows,
In just Remembrance of the Debt she owes;
With conscious Awe she hears the Critic's Fame,
And blushing hides her Wreath at *Shakespear's* Name.

Long slighted *Fancy*, with a Mother's Care,
Wept o'er his Works, and felt the last Despair.
Torn from her Head, she saw the Roses fall,
By all deserted, tho' admir'd by all.
"And oh! she cry'd, shall Science still resign
"Whate'er is Nature's, and whate'er is mine?
"Shall *Taste* and *Art*, but shew a cold Regard,
"And scornful Pride reject th' unletter'd Bard?
"Ye myrtled Nymphs, who own my gentle Reign,
"Tune the sweet Lyre, and grace my airy Train!
"If, where ye rove, your searching Eyes have known
"One perfect Mind, which Judgment calls its own;
"There ev'ry Breast its fondest Hopes must bend,
"And ev'ry Muse with Tears await her Friend.

'Twas then fair *Isis* from her Stream arose,
In kind Compassion of her Sister's Woes.
'Twas then she promis'd to the mourning Maid
Th' immortal Honours, which thy Hands have paid:

"My best lov'd Son (she said) shall yet restore
"Thy ruin'd Sweets, and Fancy weep no more.

Each rising Art by slow Gradation moves,
Toil builds on Toil, and Age on Age improves. .
The Muse alone unequal dealt her Rage,
And grac'd with noblest Pomp her earliest Stage.
Preserv'd thro' Time, the speaking Scenes impart
Each changeful Wish of *Phædra*'s tortur'd Heart;
Or paint the Curse, that mark'd the * *Theban*'s Reign,
A Bed incestuous, and a Father slain.
Line after Line our pitying Eyes o'erflow,
Trace the sad Tale, and own another's Woe.

To *Rome* remov'd, with equal Pow'r to please,
The *Comic* Sisters kept their native Ease.
With jealous Fear declining *Greece* beheld
Her own *Menander*'s Art almost excell'd!
But ev'ry Muse essay'd to raise in vain
Some labour'd Rival of her *Tragic* Strain:
Ilissus' Laurels, tho' transferr'd with Toil,
Droop'd their fair Leaves, nor knew th' unfriendly Soil.

When *Rome* herself, her envy'd Glories dead,
No more Imperial, stoop'd her conquer'd Head:
Luxuriant *Florence* chose a softer Theme,
While all was Peace, by *Arno*'s silver Stream.
With sweeter Notes th' *Etrurian* Vales complain'd,
And Arts reviving told—a *Cosmo* reign'd.
Their wanton Lyres the Bards of *Provence* strung,
Sweet flow'd the Lays, but Love was all they sung.
The gay Description could not fail to move,
For, led by Nature, all are Friends to Love.

But Heav'n, still rising in its Works, decreed
The perfect Boast of Time should last succeed.

* The *Œdipus* of *Sophocles*.

The beauteous Union must appear at length,
Of *Tuscan* Fancy, and *Athenian* Strength:
One greater Muse *Eliza*'s Reign adorn,
And ev'n a *Shakespear* to her Fame be born!

Yet ah! so bright her Morning's op'ning Ray,
In vain our *Britain* hop'd an equal Day!
No second Growth the Western Isle could bear,
At once exhausted with too rich a Year.
Too nicely *Johnson* knew the Critic's Part,
Nature in him was almost lost in Art.
Of softer Mold the gentle *Fletcher* came,
The next in Order, as the next in Name.
With pleas'd Attention 'midst his Scenes we find
Each glowing Thought, that warms the Female Mind;
Each melting Sigh, and ev'ry tender Tear,
The Lover's Wishes and the Virgin's Fear.
His * ev'ry Strain the Loves and Graces own;
But stronger *Shakespear* felt for Man alone:
Drawn by his Pen, our ruder Passions stand
Th' unrivall'd Picture of his early Hand.

With gradual Steps, and slow, exacter *France*
Saw Art's fair Empire o'er her Shores advance:
By length of Toil, a bright Perfection knew,
Correctly bold, and just in all she drew.
Till late *Corneille* from Epick † *Lucan* brought
The full Expression, and the *Roman* thought;
And classic Judgment gain'd to sweet *Racine*
The temp'rate Strength of *Maro*'s chaster Line.

But wilder far the *British* Laurel spread,
And Wreaths less artful crown our Poet's Head.
Yet He alone to ev'ry Scene could give
Th' Historian's Truth, and bid the Manners live.

* Their Characters are thus distinguish'd by Mr. *Dryden*.
† The favourite Author of the Elder *Corneille*.

Wak'd at his Call I view, with glad Surprize,
Majestic Forms of mighty Monarchs rise.
There *Henry*'s Trumpets spread their loud Alarms,
And laurel'd Conquest waits her Hero's Arms.
Here gentler *Edward* claims a pitying Sigh,
Scarce born to Honours, and so soon to die!
Yet shall thy Throne, unhappy Infant, bring
No Beam of Comfort to the guilty King?
The * Time shall come, when *Glo'ster*'s Heart shall
bleed
In Life's last Hours, with Horror of the Deed:
When dreary Visions shall at last present
Thy vengeful Image, in the midnight Tent:
Thy Hand unseen the secret Death shall bear,
Blunt the weak Sword, and break th' oppressive Spear.

Where'er we turn, by Fancy charm'd, we find
Some sweet Illusion of the cheated Mind.
Oft, wild of Wing, she calls the Soul to rove
With humbler Nature, in the rural Grove;
Where Swains contented own the quiet Scene,
And twilight Fairies tread the circled Green:
Drest by her Hand, the Woods and Vallies smile,
And Spring diffusive decks th' *enchanted Isle.*
O blest in all that Genius gives to charm,
Whose Morals mend us, and whose Passions warm!
Oft let my Youth attend thy various Page,
Where rich Invention rules th' unbounded Stage.
There ev'ry Scene the Poet's Warmth may raise,
And melting Music find the softest Lays.
O might the Muse with equal Ease persuade,
Expressive Picture, to adopt thine Aid!
Some pow'rful *Raphael* shou'd again appear,
And Arts consenting fix their Empire here.

* Tempus erit Turno, magno cum optaverit emptum
Intactum Pallanta, &c.

Methinks ev'n now I view some fair Design,
Where breathing Nature lives in ev'ry Line:
Chaste, and subdu'd, the modest Colours lie,
In fair Propo̊rtion to th' approving Eye—
And see, where * *Antony* lamenting stands
In fixt Distress, and spreads his pleading Hands!
O'er the pale Corse the Warrior seems to bend,
Deep sunk in Grief, and mourns his murther'd
Friend!
Still as they press, he calls on all around,
Lifts the torn Robe, and points the bleeding Wound.

But † who is he, whose Brows exalted bear
A Rage impatient, and a fiercer Air?
Ev'n now, his Thoughts with eager Vengeance doom
The last sad Ruin of ungrateful *Rome*.
Till, slow-advancing o'er the tented Plain,
In sable Weeds, appear the Kindred-train:
The frantic Mother leads their wild Despair,
Beats her swoln.Breast, and rends her silver Hair.
And see he yields! . . . the Tears unbidden start,
And conscious Nature claims th' unwilling Heart!
O'er all the Man conflicting Passions rise,
Rage grasps the Sword, while *Pity* melts the Eyes.

Thus, gen'rous Critic, as thy Bard inspires,
The Sister Arts shall nurse their drooping Fires;
Each from his Scenes her Stores alternate bring,
Spread the fair Tints, or wake the vocal String:
Those *Sibyl*-Leaves, the Sport of ev'ry Wind,
(For Poets ever were a careless Kind)
By thee dispos'd, no farther Toil demand,
But, just to Nature, own thy forming Hand.

* See the tragedy of *Julius Caesar*.

† *Coriolanus*. See Mr. *Spence*'s Dialogues on the *Odyssey*.

So spread o'er *Greece*, th' harmonious Whole unknown,
Ev'n *Homer*'s Numbers charm'd by Parts alone.
Their own *Ulysses* scarce had wander'd more,
By Winds and Waters cast on ev'ry Shore:
When, rais'd by Fate, some former *Hanmer* join'd
Each beauteous image of the tuneful mind;
And bad, like Thee, his *Athens*, ever claim,
A fond Alliance, with the Poet's Name.

Oxford, Dec. 3,
1743.

FINIS.

ODES

ON SEVERAL

DESCRIPTIVE and *ALLEGORIC*

SUBJECTS.

By WILLIAM COLLINS.

——Ειην
Ευρησιεπης αναγεισθαι
Προσφορος εν Μοισᾶν Διφρω·
Τολμα δε και αμφιλαφης Δυναμις
Εσποιτο.—— Πινδαρ. Ολυμπ. Θ.

LONDON

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CONTENTS

ODE to PITY.

O THOU, the Friend of Man assign'd,
With balmy Hands his Wounds to bind,
And charm his frantic Woe:
When first *Distress* with Dagger keen
Broke forth to waste his destin'd Scene,
His wild unsated Foe!

2.

By *Pella's* * Bard, a magic Name,
By all the Griefs his Thought could frame,
Receive my humble Rite:
Long, *Pity*, let the Nations view
Thy sky-worn Robes of tend'rest Blue,
And Eyes of dewy Light!

3.

But wherefore need I wander wide
To old *Ilissus'* distant Side,
Deserted Stream, and mute?
Wild *Arun* † too has heard thy Strains,
And Echo, 'midst my native Plains,
Been sooth'd by *Pity's* Lute.

4.

There first the Wren thy Myrtles shed
On gentlest *Otway's* infant Head,
To Him thy Cell was shown;

* *Euripides*, of whom *Aristotle* pronounces, on a Comparison of him with *Sophocles*, That he was the greater Master of the tender Passions, ἦν τραγικώτερος.

† The River *Arun* runs by the Village in *Sussex*, where *Otway* had his Birth.

EPODE.

In earliest *Greece* to Thee with partial Choice,
 The Grief-full Muse addrest her infant Tongue;
The Maids and Matrons, on her awful Voice,
 Silent and pale in wild Amazement hung.

Yet He, the Bard * who first invok'd thy Name,
 Disdain'd in *Marathon* its Pow'r to feel:
For not alone he nurs'd the Poet's flame,
 But reach'd from Virtue's Hand the Patriot's Steel.

But who is He whom later Garlands grace,
 Who left a-while o'er *Hybla*'s Dews to rove,
With trembling Eyes thy dreary Steps to trace,
 Where Thou and *Furies* shar'd the baleful Grove?

Wrapt in thy cloudy Veil, the *Incestuous Queen* †
 Sigh'd the sad Call ‡ her Son and Husband hear'd,
When once alone it broke the silent Scene,
 And He the Wretch of *Thebes* no more appear'd.

O *Fear*, I know Thee by my throbbing Heart,
 Thy with'ring Pow'r inspir'd each mournful Line,
Tho' gentle *Pity* claim her mingled Part,
 Yet all the Thunders of the Scene are thine!

ANTISTROPHE.

Thou who such weary Lengths hast past,
Where wilt thou rest, mad Nymph, at last?
Say, wilt thou shroud in haunted Cell,
Where gloomy *Rape* and *Murder* dwell?

* *Æschylus.* † *Jocasta.*

‡ —— οὐδ' ἔτ' ὠρώρει βοή,
Ἦν μὲν σιωπή· φθέγμα δ' ἐξαίφνης τινὸς
Θώϋξεν αὐτόν, ὥστε πάντας ὀρθίας
Στῆσαι φόβῳ δείσαντας ἐξαίφνης τρίχας.
See the Œdip. Colon. of *Sophocles*.

Or, in some hollow'd Seat,
'Gainst which the big Waves beat,
Hear drowning Sea-men's Cries in Tempests brought!
Dark Pow'r, with shudd'ring meek submitted
Thought
Be mine, to read the Visions old,
Which thy awak'ning Bards have told:
And lest thou meet my blasted View,
Hold each strange Tale devoutly true;
Ne'er be I found, by Thee o'eraw'd,
In that thrice-hallow'd Eve abroad,
When Ghosts, as Cottage-Maids believe,
Their pebbled Beds permitted leave,
And *Gobblins* haunt from Fire, or Fen,
Or Mine, or Flood, the Walks of Men!
O Thou whose Spirit most possest
The sacred Seat of *Shakespear's* Breast!
By all that from thy Prophet broke,
In thy Divine Emotions spoke;
Hither again thy Fury deal,
Teach me but once like Him to feel:
His *Cypress Wreath* my Meed decree,
And I, O *Fear*, will dwell with Thee!

ODE to SIMPLICITY.

1.

O THOU by *Nature* taught,
To breathe her genuine Thought,
In Numbers warmly pure, and sweetly strong:
Who first on Mountains wild,
In *Fancy* loveliest Child,
Thy Babe, or *Pleasure*'s, nurs'd the Pow'rs of Song!

2.

Thou, who with Hermit Heart
Disdain'st the Wealth of Art,
And Gauds, and pageant Weeds, and trailing Pall:
But com'st a decent Maid
In *Attic* Robe array'd,
O chaste unboastful Nymph, to Thee I call!

3.

By all the honey'd Store
On *Hybla*'s Thymy Shore,
By all her Blooms, and mingled Murmurs dear,
By Her *, whose Love-lorn Woe,
In Ev'ning Musings slow
Sooth'd sweetly sad *Electra*'s Poet's Ear:

4.

By old *Cephisus* deep,
Who spread his wavy Sweep
In warbled Wand'rings round thy green Retreat,

* The ἀηδὼν, or Nightingale, for which *Sophocles* seems to have entertain'd a peculiar Fondness.

On whose enamel'd Side
When holy *Freedom* died
No equal Haunt allur'd thy future Feet.

5.

O Sister meek of Truth,
To my admiring Youth,
Thy sober Aid and native Charms infuse!
The Flow'rs that sweetest breathe,
Tho' Beauty cull'd the Wreath,
Still ask thy Hand to range their order'd Hues.

6.

While *Rome* could none esteem
But Virtue's Patriot Theme,
You lov'd her Hills, and led her Laureate Band:
But staid to sing alone
To one distinguish'd Throne,
And turn'd thy Face, and fled her alter'd Land.

7.

No more, in Hall or Bow'r,
The Passions own thy Pow'r,
Love, only Love her forceless Numbers mean:
For Thou hast left her Shrine,
Nor Olive more, nor Vine,
Shall gain thy Feet to bless the servile Scene.

8.

Tho' Taste, tho' Genius bless,
To some divine Excess,
Faints the cold Work till Thou inspire the whole;
What each, what all supply,
May court, may charm, our Eye;
Thou, only Thou, can'st raise the meeting Soul!

9.

Of These let others ask,
To aid some mighty Task,
I only seek to find thy temp'rate Vale:
Where oft my Reed might sound
To Maids and Shepherds round,
And all thy Sons, O *Nature*, learn my Tale.

ODE ON THE POETICAL CHARACTER.

As once, if not with light Regard,
I read aright that gifted Bard,
(Him whose School above the rest
His Loveliest *Elfin* Queen has blest.)
One, only One, unrival'd Fair *,
Might hope the magic Girdle wear,
At solemn Turney hung on high,
The Wish of each love-darting Eye;

Lo! to each other Nymph in turn applied,
As if, in Air unseen, some hov'ring Hand,
Some chaste and Angel-Friend to Virgin-Fame,
With whisper'd Spell had burst the starting Band,
It left unblest her loath'd dishonour'd Side;
Happier hopeless Fair, if never
Her baffled Hånd with vain Endeavour
Had touch'd that fatal Zone to her denied!

Young *Fancy* thus, to me Divinest Name,
To whom, prepar'd and bath'd in Heav'n,
The Cest of amplest Pow'r is giv'n:
To few the God-like Gift assigns,
To gird their blest prophetic Loins,
And gaze her Visions wild, and feel unmix'd her Flame!

2.

The Band, as Fairy Legends say,
Was wove on that creating Day,
When He, who call'd with Thought to Birth
Yon tented Sky, this laughing Earth,

* *Florimel.* See *Spenser* Leg. 4th.

And drest with Springs, and Forests tall,
And pour'd the Main engirting all,
Long by the lov'd *Enthusiast* woo'd,
Himself in some Diviner Mood,
Retiring, sate with her alone,
And plac'd her on his Saphire Throne,
The whiles, the vaulted Shrine around,
Seraphic Wires were heard to sound,
Now sublimest Triumph swelling,
Now on Love and Mercy dwelling;
And she, from out the veiling cloud,
Breath'd her magic Notes aloud:
And Thou, Thou rich-hair'd Youth of Morn,
And all thy subject Life was born!
The dang'rous Passions kept aloof,
Far from the sainted growing Woof:
But near it sate Ecstatic *Wonder*,
List'ning the deep applauding Thunder;
And *Truth*, in sunny Vest array'd,
By whose the Tarsel's Eyes were made;
All the shad'wy Tribes of *Mind*,
In braided Dance their Murmurs join'd,
And all the bright uncounted *Pow'rs*
Who feed on Heav'n's ambrosial Flow'rs.
Where is the Bard, whose Soul can now
Its high presuming Hopes avow?
Where He who thinks, with Rapture blind,
This hallow'd Work for Him design'd?

3.

High on some Cliff, to Heav'n up-pil'd,
Of rude Access, of Prospect wild,
Where, tangled round the jealous Steep,
Strange Shades o'erbrow the Valleys deep,
And holy *Genii* guard the Rock,
Its Gloomes embrown, its Springs unlock,

While on its rich ambitious Head,
An *Eden*, like his own, lies spread.
I view that Oak, the fanciest Glades among,
By which as *Milton* lay, His Ev'ning Ear,
From many a Cloud that drop'd Ethereal Dew,
Nigh spher'd in Heav'n its native Strains could hear:
On which that ancient Trump he reach'd was hung;
  Thither oft his Glory greeting,
  From *Waller*'s Myrtle Shades retreating,
With many a Vow from Hope's aspiring Tongue,
My trembling Feet his guiding Steps pursue;
  In vain—Such Bliss to One alone,
  Of all the Sons of Soul was known,
  And Heav'n, and *Fancy*, kindred Pow'rs,
  Have now o'erturn'd th' inspiring Bow'rs,
Or curtain'd close such Scene from ev'ry future View.

ODE,

Written in the beginning of the year 1746.

How sleep the Brave, who sink to Rest,
By all their Country's Wishes blest!
When *Spring*, with dewy Fingers cold,
Returns to deck their hallow'd Mold,
She there shall dress a sweeter Sod,
Than *Fancy*'s Feet have ever trod.

2.

By Fairy Hands their Knell is rung,
By Forms unseen their Dirge is sung;
There *Honour* comes, a Pilgrim grey,
To bless the Turf that wraps their Clay,
And *Freedom* shall a-while repair,
To dwell a weeping Hermit there!

ODE to MERCY.

STROPHE.

O THOU, who sit'st a smiling Bride
By *Valour's* arm'd and awful Side,
Gentlest of Sky-born Forms, and best ador'd:
Who oft with Songs, divine to hear,
Win'st from his fatal Grasp the Spear,
And hid'st in Wreaths of Flow'rs his bloodless Sword!
Thou who, amidst the deathful Field,
By Godlike Chiefs alone beheld,
Oft with thy Bosom bare art found,
Pleading for him the Youth who sinks to Ground:
See, *Mercy*, see, with pure and loaded Hands,
Before thy Shrine my Country's Genius stands,
And decks thy Altar still, tho' pierc'd with many a Wound!

ANTISTROPHE.

When he whom ev'n our Joys provoke,
The *Fiend of Nature* join'd his Yoke,
And rush'd in Wrath to make our Isle his Prey;
Thy Form, from out thy sweet Abode,
O'ertook Him on his blasted Road,
And stop'd his Wheels, and look'd his Rage away.

I see recoil his sable Steeds,
That bore Him swift to Salvage Deeds,
Thy tender melting Eyes they own;
O Maid, for all thy Love to *Britain* shown,
Where *Justice* bars her Iron Tow'r,
To Thee we build a roseate Bow'r,
Thou, Thou shalt rule our Queen, and share our Monarch's Throne!

ODE to LIBERTY.

STROPHE.

WHO shall awake the *Spartan* Fife,
And call in solemn Sounds to Life,
The Youths, whose Locks divinely spreading,
Like vernal Hyacinths in sullen Hue,
At once the Breath of Fear and Virtue shedding,
Applauding *Freedom* lov'd of old to view?
What New *Alcæus* *, Fancy-blest,
Shall sing the Sword, in Myrtles drest,
At *Wisdom's* Shrine a-while its Flame concealing,
(What Place so fit to seal a Deed renown'd?)
Till she her brightest Lightnings round revealing,
It leap'd in Glory forth, and dealt her prompted Wound!
O Goddess, in that feeling Hour,
When most its Sounds would court thy Ears,
Let not my Shell's misguided Pow'r †,
E'er draw thy sad, thy mindful Tears.
No, *Freedom*, no, I will not tell,
How *Rome*, before thy weeping Face,

* Alluding to that beautiful Fragment of *Alcæus*.

Ἐν μύρτου κλαδὶ τὸ ξίφος φορήσω,
Ὥσπερ Ἁρμόδιος καὶ Ἀριστογείτων.
Φίλταθ' Ἁρμόδι', οὔπω τέθνηκας,
Νήσοις δ' ἐν Μακάρων σέ φασιν εἶναι.
Ἐν μύρτου κλαδὶ τὸ ξίφος φορήσω,
Ὥσπερ Ἁρμόδιος καὶ Ἀριστογείτων,
Ὅτ' Ἀθηναίης ἐν θυσίαις
Ἄνδρα τύραννον Ἵππαρχον ἐκαινέτην.
Ἀεὶ σφῶν κλέος ἔσσεται κατ' αἶαν,
Φίλταθ' Ἁρμόδι', καὶ Ἀριστογείτων.

† Μὴ μὴ ταῦτα λέγωμες, ἃ δάκρυον ἤγαγε Δηοῖ.
Callimach. Ὕμνος εἰς Δήμητρα.

With heaviest Sound, a Giant-statue, fell,
Push'd by a wild and artless Race,
From off its wide ambitious Base,
When Time his Northern Sons of Spoil awoke,
And all the blended Work of Strength and Grace,
With many a rude repeated Stroke,
And many a barb'rous Yell, to thousand Fragments broke.

EPODE.

2.

Yet ev'n, where'er the least appear'd,
Th' admiring World thy Hand rever'd;
Still 'midst the scatter'd States around,
Some Remnants of Her Strength were found;
They saw by what escap'd the Storm,
How wond'rous rose her perfect Form;
How in the great the labour'd Whole,
Each mighty Master pour'd his Soul!
For sunny *Florence*, Seat of Art,
Beneath her Vines preserv'd a part,
Till They *, whom Science lov'd to name,
(O who could fear it?) quench'd her Flame.
And lo, an humbler Relick laid
In jealous *Pisa*'s Olive Shade!
See small *Marino* † joins the Theme,
Tho' least, not last in thy Esteem:
Strike, louder strike th' ennobling Strings
To those ‡, whose Merchant Sons were Kings;
To Him ** who, deck'd with pearly Pride,
In *Adria* weds his green-hair'd Bride;
Hail Port of Glory, Wealth, and Pleasure,
Ne'er let me change this *Lydian* Measure:

* The family of the *Medici*.
† The little Republic of *San Marino*.
‡ The *Venetians*. ** The Doge of *Venice*.

Nor e'er her former Pride relate,
To sad *Liguria*'s * bleeding State.
Ah no! more pleas'd thy Haunts I seek,
On wild *Helvetia*'s † Mountains bleak:
(Where, when the favor'd of thy Choice,
The daring Archer heard thy Voice;
Forth from his Eyrie rous'd in Dread,
The rav'ning *Eagle* northward fled.)
Or dwell in willow'd Meads more near,
With Those ‡ to whom Thy Stork is dear:
Those whom the Rod of *Alva* bruis'd,
Whose Crown a *British* Queen ** refus'd!
The Magic works, Thou feel'st the Strains,
One holier Name alone remains;
The perfect Spell shall then avail,
Hail Nymph, ador'd by *Britain*, Hail!

ANTISTROPHE.

Beyond the Measure vast of Thought,
The Works, the Wizzard *Time* has wrought!
The *Gaul*, 'tis held of antique Story,
Saw *Britain* link'd to his now adverse Strand ††,
No Sea between, nor Cliff sublime and hoary,
He pass'd with unwet Feet through all our Land.

* *Genoa.* † *Switzerland.*

‡ The *Dutch*, amongst whom there are very severe Penalties for those who are convicted of killing this Bird. They are kept tame in almost all their Towns, and particularly at the *Hague*, of the Arms of which they make a Part. The common People of *Holland* are said to entertain a superstitious Sentiment, That if the whole Species of them should become extinct, they should lose their Liberties.

** Queen *Elizabeth.*

†† This Tradition is mention'd by several of our old Historians. Some Naturalists too have endeavour'd to support the probability of the Fact, by Arguments drawn from the correspondent Disposition of the two opposite Coasts. I don't remember that any Poetical Use has been hitherto made of it.

To the Blown *Baltic* then, they say,
The wild Waves found another way,
Where *Orcas* howls, his wolfish Mountains rounding;
Till all the banded West at once 'gan rise,
A wide wild Storm ev'n Nature's self confounding,
With'ring her Giant Sons with strange uncouth Surprise.
This pillar'd Earth so firm and wide,
By Winds and inward Labors torn,
In Thunders dread was push'd aside,
And down the should'ring Billows born.
And see, like Gems, her laughing Train,
The little Isles on ev'ry side,
Mona *, once hid from those who search the Main,
Where thousand Elfin Shapes abide,
And *Wight* who checks the west'ring Tide,
For Thee consenting Heav'n has each bestow'd,
A fair Attendant on her sov'reign Pride:
To Thee this blest Divorce she ow'd,
For thou hast made her Vales thy lov'd, thy last Abode!

SECOND EPODE.

Then too, 'tis said, an hoary Pile,
'Midst the green Navel of our Isle,
Thy Shrine in some religious Wood,
O Soul-enforcing Goddess, stood!

* There is a Tradition in the Isle of *Man*, that a Mermaid becoming enamour'd of a young Man of extraordinary Beauty, took an Opportunity of meeting him one day as he walked on the Shore, and open'd her Passion to him, but was receiv'd with a Coldness, occasion'd by his Horror and Surprize at her Appearance. This however was so misconstrued by the Sea-Lady, that in revenge for his Treatment of her, she punish'd the whole Island, by covering it with a Mist, so that all who attempted to carry on any Commerce with it, either never arriv'd at it, but wander'd up and down the Sea, or were on a sudden wreck'd upon its Cliffs.

There oft the painted Native's Feet,
Were wont thy Form celestial meet:
Tho' now with hopeless Toil we trace
Time's backward Rolls, to find its place;
Whether the fiery-tressed *Dane*,
Or *Roman*'s self o'erturn'd the Fane,
Or in what Heav'n-left Age it fell,
'Twere hard for modern Song to tell.
Yet still, if Truth those Beams infuse,
Which guide at once, and charm the Muse,
Beyond yon braided Clouds that lie,
Paving the light-embroider'd Sky:
Amidst the bright pavilion'd Plains,
The beauteous *Model* still remains.
There happier than in Islands blest,
Or Bow'rs by Spring or *Hebe* drest,
The Chiefs who fill our *Albion*'s Story,
In warlike Weeds, retir'd in Glory,
Hear their consorted *Druids* sing
Their Triumphs to th' immortal String.
How may the Poet now unfold
What never Tongue or Numbers told?
How learn delighted, and amaz'd,
What Hands unknown that Fabric rais'd?
Ev'n now before his favor'd Eyes,
In *Gothic* Pride it seems to rise!
Yet *Græcia*'s graceful Orders join,
Majestic thro' the mix'd Design;
The secret Builder knew to chuse,
Each sphere-found Gem of richest Hues:
Whate'er Heav'n's purer Mold contains,
When nearer Suns emblaze its Veins;
There on the Walls the *Patriot*'s Sight,
May ever hang with fresh Delight,
And, grav'd with some Prophetic Rage,
Read *Albion*'s Fame thro' ev'ry Age.

Ye Forms Divine, ye Laureate Band,
That near her inmost Altar stand!
Now sooth Her, to her blissful Train
Blithe *Concord's* social Form to gain:
Concord, whose Myrtle Wand can steep
Ev'n *Anger's* blood-shot Eyes in Sleep:
Before whose breathing Bosom's Balm,
Rage drops his Steel, and Storms grow calm;
Her let our Sires and Matrons hoar
Welcome to *Britain's* ravag'd Shore,
Our Youths, enamour'd of the Fair,
Play with the Tangles of her Hair,
Till in one loud applauding Sound,
The Nations shout to Her around,
O how supremely art thou blest,
Thou, Lady, Thou shalt rule the West!

ODE, *to a Lady on the Death of Colonel* Ross *in the Action of Fontenoy.*

1.

While, lost to all his former Mirth,
Britannia's Genius bends to Earth,
And mourns the fatal Day:
While stain'd with Blood he strives to tear
Unseemly from his Sea-green Hair
The Wreaths of chearful *May*:

2.

The Thoughts which musing Pity pays,
And fond Remembrance loves to raise,
Your faithful Hours attend:
Still Fancy to Herself unkind,
Awakes to Grief the soften'd Mind,
And points the bleeding Friend.

3.

By rapid *Scheld's* descending Wave
His Country's Vows shall bless the Grave,
Where'er the Youth is laid:
That sacred Spot the Village Hind
With ev'ry sweetest Turf shall bind,
And Peace protect the Shade.

4.

Blest Youth, regardful of thy Doom,
Aërial Hands shall build thy Tomb,
With shadowy Trophies crown'd:
Whilst *Honor* bath'd in Tears shall rove
To sigh thy Name thro' ev'ry Grove,
And call his Heros round.

5.

The warlike Dead of ev'ry Age,
Who fill the fair recording Page,
Shall leave their sainted Rest:
And, half-reclining on his Spear,
Each wond'ring Chief by turns appear,
To hail the blooming Guest.

6.

Old *Edward's* Sons, unknown to yield,
Shall croud from *Cressy*'s laurell'd Field,
And gaze with fix'd Delight;
Again for *Britain*'s Wrongs they feel,
Again they snatch the gleamy Steel,
And wish th' avenging Fight.

7.

But lo where, sunk in deep Despair,
Her Garments torn, her Bosom bare,
Impatient *Freedom* lies!
Her matted Tresses madly spread,
To ev'ry Sod, which wraps the Dead,
She turns her joyless Eyes.

8.

Ne'er shall she leave that lowly Ground,
Till Notes of Triumph bursting round
Proclaim her Reign restor'd:
Till *William* seek the sad Retreat,
And bleeding at her sacred Feet,
Present the sated Sword.

9.

If, weak to sooth so soft an Heart,
These pictur'd Glories nought impart,
To dry thy constant Tear:

If yet, in Sorrow's distant Eye,
Expos'd and pale thou see'st him lie,
Wild War insulting near:

10.

Where'er from Time Thou court'st Relief,
The Muse shall still, with social Grief,
Her gentlest Promise keep:
Ev'n humbled *Harting*'s cottag'd Vale
Shall learn the sad repeated Tale,
And bid her Shepherds weep.

[In Dodsley's Collection and in Langhorne's edition the fourth stanza is printed thus :—

O'er him, whose doom thy virtues grieve,
Aërial forms shall sit at eve
And bend the pensive head!
And, fall'n to save his injur'd land,
Imperial Honor's awful hand
Shall point his lonely bed! C. S.]

ODE to EVENING.

If ought of Oaten Stop, or Pastoral Song,
May hope, O pensive *Eve*, to soothe thine Ear,
Like thy own brawling Springs,
Thy Springs, and dying Gales,
O *Nymph* reserv'd, while now the bright-hair'd Sun
Sits in yon western Tent, whose cloudy Skirts,
With Brede ethereal wove,
O'erhang his wavy Bed:
Now Air is hush'd, save where the weak-ey'd Bat,
With short shrill Shriek flits by on leathern Wing,
Or where the Beetle winds
His small but sullen Horn,
As oft he rises 'midst the twilight Path,
Against the Pilgrim born in heedless Hum:
Now teach me, *Maid* compos'd,
To breathe some soften'd Strain,
Whose Numbers stealing thro' thy darkning Vale,
May not unseemly with its Stillness suit,
As musing slow, I hail
Thy genial lov'd Return!
For when thy folding Star arising shews
His paly Circlet, at his warning Lamp
The fragrant *Hours*, and *Elves*
Who slept in Buds the Day,
And many a *Nymph* who wreaths her Brows with Sedge,
And sheds the fresh'ning Dew, and lovelier still,
The *Pensive Pleasures* sweet
Prepare thy shadowy Car.
Then let me rove some wild and heathy Scene,
Or find some Ruin 'midst its dreary Dells,

Whose Walls more awful nod
By thy religious Gleams.
Or if chill blust'ring Winds, or driving Rain,
Prevent my willing Feet, be mine the Hut,
That from the Mountain's Side,
Views Wilds, and swelling Floods,
And Hamlets brown, and dim-discover'd Spires,
And hears their simple Bell, and marks o'er all
Thy Dewy Fingers draw
The gradual dusky Veil.
While *Spring* shall pour his Show'rs, as oft he wont,
And bathe thy breathing Tresses, meekest *Eve!*
While *Summer* loves to sport,
Beneath thy ling'ring Light;
While sallow *Autumn* fills thy Lap with Leaves,
Or *Winter* yelling thro' the troublous Air,
Affrights thy shrinking Train,
And rudely rends thy Robes.
So long regardful of thy quiet Rule,
Shall *Fancy*, *Friendship*, *Science*, smiling *Peace*,
Thy gentlest Influence own,
And love thy fav'rite Name!

[This Ode was reprinted in Dodsley's Collection of 1748 with the following alterations :—

l. 2. "May hope, chaste Eve, to soothe thy modest ear."
l. 3. "solemn" *for* "brawling".
l. 9. "While air is hush'd."
l. 24. "Who slept in flowers the day."
l. 29. "Then lead, calm vot'ress, where some sheety lake
Cheers the lone heath, or some time-hallowed pile,
Or upland fallows grey
Reflect its last cool gleam."
l. 33. "But when chill blust'ring winds, or driving rain,
Forbid my willing feet, be mine the hut."
l. 49. "So long, sure-found beneath the sylvan shed,
Shall Fancy, Friendship, Science, rose-lip'd Health,
Thy gentlest influence own,
And hymn thy fav'rite name!" C.S.]

ODE to PEACE.

O THOU, who bad'st thy Turtles bear
Swift from his Grasp thy golden Hair,
And sought'st thy native Skies:
When *War*, by Vultures drawn from far,
To *Britain* bent his Iron Car,
And bad his Storms arise!

2.

Tir'd of his rude tyrannic Sway,
Our Youth shall fix some festive Day,
His sullen Shrines to burn:
But Thou who hear'st the turning Spheres,
What Sounds may charm thy partial Ears,
And gain thy blest Return!

3.

O *Peace*, thy injur'd Robes up-bind,
O rise, and leave not one behind
Of all thy beamy Train;
The *British* Lion, Goddess sweet,
Lies stretch'd on Earth to kiss thy Feet,
And own thy holier Reign.

4.

Let others court thy transient Smile,
But come to grace thy western Isle,
By warlike *Honour* led!
And, while around her Ports rejoice,
While all her Sons adore thy Choice,
With Him for ever wed!

THE MANNERS.

AN ODE.

FAREWELL, for clearer Ken design'd,
The dim-discover'd Tracts of Mind:
Truths which, from Action's Paths retir'd,
My silent Search in vain requir'd!
No more my Sail that Deep explores,
No more I search those magic Shores,
What Regions part the World of Soul,
Or whence thy Streams, *Opinion*, roll:
If e'er I round such Fairy Field,
Some Pow'r impart the Spear and Shield,
At which the Wizzard *Passions* fly,
By which the Giant *Follies* die!
Farewell the Porch whose Roof is seen,
Arch'd with th' enlivening Olive's Green:
Where *Science*, prank'd in tissued Vest,
By *Reason*, *Pride*, and *Fancy* drest,
Comes like a Bride so trim array'd,
To wed with *Doubt* in *Plato*'s Shade!
Youth of the quick uncheated Sight,
Thy Walks, *Observance*, more invite!
O Thou, who lov'st that ampler Range,
Where Life's wide Prospects round thee change,
And with her mingling Sons ally'd,
Throw'st the prattling Page aside:
To me in Converse sweet impart,
To read in Man the native Heart,
To learn, where Science sure is found,
From Nature as she lives around:
And gazing oft her Mirror true,
By turns each shifting Image view!

Till meddling *Art*'s officious Lore,
Reverse the Lessons taught before,
Alluring from a safer Rule,
To dream in her enchanted School;
Thou Heav'n, whate'er of Great we boast,
Hast blest this social Science most.
Retiring hence to thoughtful Cell,
As *Fancy* breathes her potent Spell,
Not vain she finds the charmful Task,
In Pageant quaint, in motley Mask,
Behold before her musing Eyes,
The countless *Manners* round her rise;
While ever varying as they pass,
To some *Contempt* applies her Glass:
With these the *white-rob'd Maids* combine,
And those the laughing *Satyrs* join!
But who is He whom now she views,
In Robe of wild contending Hues?
Thou by the Passions nurs'd, I greet
The comic Sock that binds thy Feet!
O *Humour*, Thou whose Name is known
To *Britain*'s favor'd Isle alone:
Me too amidst thy Band admit,
There where the young-eyed healthful *Wit*,
(Whose Jewels in his crisped Hair
Are plac'd each other's Beams to share,
Whom no Delights from Thee divide)
In Laughter loos'd attends thy Side!
By old *Miletus* * who so long
Has ceas'd his love-inwoven Song:
By all you taught the *Tuscan* Maids,
In chang'd *Italia*'s modern Shades:
By Him † whose *Knight*'s distinguish'd Name
Refin'd a Nation's Lust of Fame;

* Alluding to the *Milesian* Tales, some of the earliest Romances. † *Cervantes*.

Whose Tales ev'n now, with Echos sweet,
Castilia's *Moorish* Hills repeat:
Or Him ‡, whom *Seine*'s blue Nymphs deplore,
In watchet Weeds on *Gallia*'s Shore,
Who drew the sad *Sicilian* Maid,
By Virtues in her Sire betray'd:
O Nature boon, from whom proceed
Each forceful Thought, each prompted Deed;
If but from Thee I hope to feel,
On all my Heart imprint thy Seal!
Let some retreating Cynic find
Those oft-turn'd Scrolls I leave behind,
The *Sports* and I this Hour agree,
To rove thy Scene-full World with Thee!

‡ Monsieur *Le Sage*, Author of the incomparable Adventures of *Gil Blas de Santillane*, who died in *Paris* in the Year 1745.

THE PASSIONS.

AN ODE FOR MUSIC.

WHEN Music, Heav'nly Maid, was young,
While yet in early *Greece* she sung,
The Passions oft to hear her Shell,
Throng'd around her magic Cell,
Exulting, trembling, raging, fainting,
Possest beyond the Muse's Painting;
By turns they felt the glowing Mind,
Disturb'd, delighted, rais'd, refin'd.
Till once, 'tis said, when all were fir'd,
Fill'd with Fury, rapt, inspir'd,
From the supporting Myrtles round,
They snatch'd her Instruments of Sound,
And as they oft had heard a-part
Sweet Lessons of her forceful Art,
Each, for Madness rul'd the Hour,
Would prove his own expressive Pow'r.

First *Fear* his Hand, its Skill to try,
  Amid the Chords bewilder'd laid,
And back recoil'd he knew not why,
  Ev'n at the Sound himself had made.

Next *Anger* rush'd, his Eyes on fire,
  In Lightnings own'd his secret Stings,
In one rude Clash he struck the Lyre,
  And swept with hurried Hand the Strings.

With woful Measures wan *Despair*
  Low sullen Sounds his Grief beguil'd,
A solemn, strange, and mingled Air,
  'Twas sad by Fits, by Starts 'twas wild.

But thou, O *Hope*, with Eyes so fair,
What was thy delightful Measure?
Still it whisper'd promis'd Pleasure,
And bad the lovely Scenes at distance hail!
Still would Her Touch the Strain prolong,
And from the Rocks, the Woods, the Vale,
She call'd on Echo still thro' all the Song;
And, where Her sweetest Theme She chose,
A soft responsive Voice was heard at ev'ry Close,
And *Hope* enchanted smil'd, and wav'd Her golden Hair.

And longer had She sung,—but with a Frown,
Revenge impatient rose,
He threw his blood-stain'd Sword in Thunder down,
And with a with'ring Look,
The War-denouncing Trumpet took,
And blew a Blast so loud and dread,
Were ne'er Prophetic Sounds so full of Woe.
And ever and anon he beat
The doubling Drum with furious Heat;
And tho' sometimes each dreary Pause between,
Dejected *Pity* at his Side,
Her Soul-subduing Voice applied,
Yet still He kept his wild unalter'd Mien,
While each strain'd Ball of Sight seem'd bursting from his Head.

Thy Numbers, *Jealousy*, to nought were fix'd,
Sad Proof of thy distressful State,
Of diff'ring Themes the veering Song was mix'd,
And now it courted *Love*, now raving call'd on *Hate*.

With Eyes up-rais'd, as one inspir'd,
Pale *Melancholy* sate retir'd,

And from her wild sequester'd Seat,
In Notes by Distance made more sweet,
Pour'd thro' the mellow *Horn* her pensive Soul:
  And dashing soft from Rocks around,
  Bubbling Runnels join'd the Sound;
Through Glades and Glooms the mingled Measure
    stole,
Or o'er some haunted Stream with fond Delay,
  Round an holy Calm diffusing,
  Love of Peace, and lonely Musing,
In hollow Murmurs died away.
But O how alter'd was its sprightlier Tone!
When *Chearfulness*, a Nymph of healthiest Hue,
  Her Bow a-cross her Shoulder flung,
  Her Buskins gem'd with Morning Dew,
Blew an inspiring Air, that Dale and Thicket rung,
  The Hunter's Call to *Faun* and *Dryad* known!
  The Oak-crown'd *Sisters*, and their chast-eye'd
    Queen,
  Satyrs and sylvan Boys were seen,
  Peeping from forth their Alleys green;
Brown *Exercise* rejoic'd to hear,
  And *Sport* leapt up, and seiz'd his Beechen Spear.

Last came *Joy*'s Ecstatic Trial,
He with viny Crown advancing,
  First to the lively Pipe his Hand addrest,
But soon he saw the brisk awak'ning Viol,
  Whose sweet entrancing Voice he lov'd the best.
    They would have thought who heard the Strain,
    They saw in *Tempe*'s Vale her native Maids,
    Amidst the festal sounding Shades,
  To some unwearied Minstrel dancing,
    While as his flying Fingers kiss'd the Strings,
    LOVE fram'd with *Mirth*, a gay fantastic Round,
    Loose were Her Tresses seen, her Zone unbound,

And HE amidst his frolic Play,
As if he would the charming Air repay,
Shook thousand Odours from his dewy Wings.

O *Music*, Sphere-descended Maid,
Friend of Pleasure, *Wisdom*'s Aid,
Why, Goddess, why, to us deny'd?
Lay'st Thou thy antient Lyre aside?
As in that lov'd *Athenian* Bow'r,
You learn'd an all-commanding Pow'r,
Thy mimic Soul, O Nymph endear'd,
Can well recall what then it heard.
Where is thy native simple Heart,
Devote to Virtue, Fancy, Art?
Arise as in that elder Time,
Warm, Energic, Chaste, Sublime!
Thy Wonders in that God-like Age,
Fill thy recording *Sister*'s Page—
'Tis said, and I believe the Tale,
Thy humblest *Reed* could more prevail,
Had more of Strength, diviner Rage,
Than all which charms this laggard Age,
Ev'n all at once together found,
Cæcilia's mingled World of Sound—
O bid our vain Endeavors cease,
Revive the just Designs of *Greece*,
Return in all thy simple State!
Confirm the Tales Her Sons relate!

ODE

ON

THE DEATH OF MR. THOMSON

TO

GEORGE LYTTELTON, ESQ.

THIS ODE

IS INSCRIBED BY THE AUTHOR

ADVERTISEMENT.—The scene of the following stanzas is supposed to lie on the Thames, near Richmond

ODE ON THE DEATH OF THOMSON.

I.

In yonder grave a Druid lies,
  Where slowly winds the stealing wave!
The year's best sweets shall duteous rise
  To deck its Poet's sylvan grave!

II.

In yon deep bed of whisp'ring reeds
  His airy harp * shall now be laid,
That he, whose heart in sorrow bleeds,
  May love thro' life the soothing shade.

III.

Then maids and youths shall linger here,
  And while its sounds at distance swell,
Shall sadly seem in Pity's ear
  To hear the Woodland Pilgrim's knell.

IV.

Remembrance oft shall haunt the shore
  When Thames in summer wreaths is drest,
And oft suspend the dashing oar
  To bid his gentle spirit rest!

V.

And oft as Ease and Health retire
  To breezy lawn, or forest deep,
The friend shall view yon whitening † spire,
  And 'mid the varied landscape weep.

* The harp of Æolus, of which see a description in the Castle of Indolence.

† Richmond Church.

VI.

But Thou, who own'st that earthy bed,
Ah! what will every dirge avail?
Or tears, which Love and Pity shed,
That mourn beneath the gliding sail?

VII.

Yet lives there one, whose heedless eye
Shall scorn thy pale shrine glimm'ring near?
With him, sweet bard, may Fancy die,
And Joy desert the blooming year.

VIII.

But thou, lorn stream, whose sullen tide
No sedge-crown'd Sisters now attend,
Now waft me from the green hill's side,
Whose cold turf hides the buried friend!

IX.

And see, the fairy valleys fade,
Dun Night has veil'd the solemn view!
Yet once again, dear parted shade,
Meek Nature's Child, again adieu!

X.

The genial meads assign'd to bless
Thy life, shall mourn thy early doom;
Their hinds, and shepherd-girls shall dress
With simple hands thy rural tomb.

XI.

Long, long, thy stone, and pointed clay
Shall melt the musing Briton's eyes,
O! vales, and wild woods, shall He say,
In yonder grave your Druid lies!

DIRGE IN CYMBELINE,

SUNG BY GUIDERUS AND ARVIRAGUS OVER FIDELE, SUPPOSED TO BE DEAD.

To fair Fidele's grassy tomb
  Soft maids and village hinds shall bring
Each op'ning sweet of earliest bloom,
  And rifle all the breathing Spring.

No wailing ghost shall dare appear
  To vex with shrieks this quiet grove:
But shepherd lads assemble here,
  And melting virgins own their love.

No wither'd witch shall here be seen;
  No goblins lead their nightly crew:
The female fays shall haunt the green,
  And dress thy grave with pearly dew!

The red-breast oft at ev'ning hours
  Shall kindly lend his little aid;
With hoary moss, and gather'd flow'rs,
  To deck the ground where thou art laid.

When howling winds, and beating rain,
  In tempests shake the sylvan cell;
Or 'midst the chace on ev'ry plain,
  The tender thought on thee shall dwell.

Each lonely scene shall thee restore,
  For thee the tear be duly shed;
Belov'd till life can charm no more,
  And mourn'd, till Pity's self be dead.

AN ODE ON THE POPULAR SUPERSTITIONS OF THE HIGHLANDS OF SCOTLAND,

CONSIDERED AS THE SUBJECT OF POETRY.

H—— thou return'st from Thames, whose Naiads long
Have seen thee ling'ring, with a fond delay,
Mid those soft friends, whose hearts, some future day,
Shall melt, perhaps, to hear thy tragic song.
Go, not unmindful of that cordial youth,
Whom, long endear'd, thou leav'st by Lavant's side;
Together let us wish him lasting truth,
And joy untainted with his destin'd bride.
Go! nor regardless, while these numbers boast
My short-liv'd bliss, forget my social name;
But think far off how, on the southern coast,
I met thy friendship with an equal flame!
Fresh to that soil thou turn'st, whose ev'ry vale
Shall prompt the poet, and his song demand:
To thee thy copious subjects ne'er shall fail;
Thou need'st but take the pencil to thy hand,
And paint what all believe who own thy genial land.

II.

There must thou wake perforce thy Doric quill,
'Tis Fancy's land to which thou sett'st thy feet;
Where still, 'tis said, the fairy people meet
Beneath each birken shade on mead or hill.

There each trim lass that skims the milky store
To the swart tribes their creamy bowl allots;
By night they sip it round the cottage-door,
While airy-minstrels warble jocund notes.
There every herd, by sad experience, knows
How, wing'd with fate, their elf-shot arrows fly;
When the sick ewe her summer food foregoes,
Or, stretch'd on earth, the heart-smit heifers lie.
Such airy beings awe th' untutor'd swain:
Nor thou, though learn'd, his homelier thoughts neglect;
Let thy sweet muse the rural faith sustain;
These are the themes of simple, sure effect,
That add new conquests to her boundless reign,
And fill, with double force, her heart-commanding strain.

III.

Ev'n yet preserv'd, how often may'st thou hear,
Where to the pole the Boreal mountains run,
Taught by the father to his list'ning son
Strange lays, whose power had charm'd a Spencer's ear.
At ev'ry pause, before thy mind possest,
Old Runic bards shall seem to rise around,
With uncouth lyres, in many-coloured vest,
Their matted hair with boughs fantastic crown'd:
Whether thou bid'st the well-taught hind repeat *
The choral dirge that mourns some chieftain brave,
When ev'ry shrieking maid her bosom beat,
And strew'd with choicest herbs his scented grave;
Or whether, sitting in the shepherd's shiel,
Thou hear'st some sounding tale of war's alarms;
When at the bugle's call, with fire and steel,

* First written, *relate.*

The sturdy clans pour'd forth their bony swarms,
And hostile brothers met to prove each other's arms

IV.

'Tis thine to sing, how framing hideous spells
In Sky's lone isle the gifted wizzard seer,
Lodged in the wintry cave with————,
Or in the depth * of Uist's dark forests dwells:
How they, whose sight such dreary dreams engross,
With their own visions oft astonish'd † droop,
When o'er the wat'ry strath or quaggy moss
They see the gliding ghosts unbodied troop.
Or if in sports, or on the festive green,
Their ——— glance some fated youth descry,
Who, now perhaps in lusty vigour seen
And rosy health, shall soon lamented die.
For them the viewless forms of air obey,
Their bidding heed ‡, and at their beck repair.
They know what spirit brews the stormful day,
And heartless, oft like moody madness stare
To see the phantom train their secret work prepare.

[25 lines lost.]

VI.

What though far off, from some dark dell espied
His glimm'ring mazes cheer th' excursive sight,
Yet turn, ye wand'rers, turn your steps aside,
Nor trust the guidance of that faithless light;
For watchful, lurking 'mid th' unrustling reed,
At those mirk § hours the wily monster lies,
And listens oft to hear the passing steed,
And frequent round him rolls his sullen eyes,
If chance his savage wrath may some weak wretch surprise.

* First written, *gloom*.
† First written, *afflicted*.
‡ First written, *mark*.
§ First written, *sad*.

VII.

Ah, luckless swain, o'er all unblest indeed!
  Whom late bewilder'd in the dank, dark fen,
Far from his flocks and smoking hamlet then!
  To that sad spot ——————— :
On him enrag'd, the fiend, in angry mood,
  Shall never look with pity's kind concern,
But instant, furious, raise the whelming flood
  O'er its drown'd bank, forbidding all return.
Or, if he meditate his wish'd escape
  To some dim hill that seems uprising near,
To his faint eye the grim and grisly shape,
  In all its terrors clad, shall wild appear.
Meantime, the wat'ry surge shall round him rise,
  Pour'd sudden forth from ev'ry swelling source.
What now remains but tears and hopeless sighs?
  His fear-shook limbs have lost their youthly force,
And down the waves he floats, a pale and breathless
    corse.

VIII.

For him, in vain, his anxious wife shall wait,
  Or wander forth to meet him on his way;
For him, in vain, at to-fall of the day,
  His babes shall linger at th' unclosing * gate!
Ah, ne'er shall he return! Alone, if night
  Her travell'd limbs in broken slumbers steep,
With dropping willows drest, his mournful sprite
  Shall visit sad, perchance, her silent sleep:
Then he, perhaps, with moist and wat'ry hand,
  Shall fondly seem to press her shudd'ring cheek†
And with his blue swoln face before her stand,
  And, shiv'ring cold, these piteous accents speak:

* First written, *cottage.*

† First written, *Shall seem to press her cold and shudd'ring cheek.*

Pursue *, dear wife, thy daily toils pursue
At dawn or dusk, industrious as before;
Nor e'er of me one hapless thought renew,
While I lie welt'ring on the ozier'd shore,
Drown'd by the KAELPIE's wrath, nor e'er shall aid thee more!

IX.

UNBOUNDED is thy range; with varied stile
Thy muse may, like those feath'ry tribes which spring
From their rude rocks, extend her skirting wing
Round the moist marge of each cold Hebrid isle,
To that hoar pile which still its ruins shows:
In whose small vaults a pigmy-folk is found,
Whose bones the delver with his spade upthrows,
And culls them, wond'ring, from the hallow'd ground!
Or thither where beneath the show'ry west
The mighty kings of three fair realms are laid;
Once foes, perhaps, together now they rest.
No slaves revere them, and no wars invade:
Yet frequent now, at midnight's solemn hour,
The rifted mounds their yawning cells unfold,
And forth the monarchs stalk with sov'reign pow'r
In pageant robes, and wreath'd with sheeny gold,
And on their twilight tombs aerial council hold.

X.

BUT O! o'er all, forget not KILDA's race,
On whose bleak rocks, which brave the wasting tides,
Fair Nature's daughter, Virtue, yet abides.
Go, just, as they, their blameless manners trace!

* First written, *Proceed.*

Then to my ear transmit some gentle song
Of those whose lives are yet sincere and plain,
Their bounded walks the rugged cliffs along,
And all their prospect but the wintry main.
With sparing temp'rance, at the needful time,
They drain the sainted spring, or, hunger-prest,
Along th' Atlantic rock undreading climb,
And of its eggs despoil the Solan's nest.
Thus blest in primal innocence they live,
Suffic'd and happy with that frugal fare
Which tasteful toil and hourly danger give.
Hard is their shallow soil, and bleak and bare:
Nor ever vernal bee was heard to murmur there!

XI.

Nor need'st thou blush, that such false themes engage
Thy gentle mind, of fairer stores possest;
For not alone they touch the village breast,
But fill'd in elder time th' historic page.
There Shakespeare's self, with ev'ry garland crown'd,
In musing hour, his wayward sisters found,
And with their terrors drest the magic scene.
From them he sung, when mid his bold design,
Before the Scot afflicted and aghast,
The shadowy kings of Banquo's fated line
Through the dark cave in gleamy pageant past.
Proceed, nor quit the tales which, simply told,
Could once so well my answ'ring bosom pierce;
Proceed, in forceful sounds and colours bold
The native legends of thy land rehearse;
To such adapt thy lyre and suit thy powerful verse.

XII.

In scenes like these, which, daring to depart
From sober truth, are still to nature true,

And call forth fresh delight to fancy's view,
  Th' heroic muse employ'd her TASSO's art!
How have I trembled, when, at TANCRED's stroke,
  Its gushing blood the gaping cypress pour'd;
When each live plant with mortal accents spoke,
  And the wild blast up-heav'd the vanish'd sword! *
How have I sat, when pip'd the pensive wind,
  To hear his harp, by British FAIRFAX strung.
Prevailing poet, whose undoubting mind
  Believ'd the magic wonders which he sung!
Hence, at each sound, imagination glows;
  Hence his warm lay with softest sweetness flows:
Melting it flows, pure, num'rous, strong and clear,
And fills th' impassion'd heart, and wins th' harmonious ear.†

XIII.

ALL hail, ye scenes that o'er my soul prevail,
  Ye ——— friths and lakes which, far away,
Are by smooth ANNAN fill'd, or past'ral TAY,
  Or DON's romantic springs, at distance, hail!
The time shall come when I, perhaps, may tread
  Your lowly glens, o'erhung with spreading broom,
Or o'er your stretching heaths by fancy led:
Then will I dress once more the faded bow'r,
  Where JOHNSON sat in DRUMMOND's ——— shade;

* These four lines were originally written thus:—

How have I trembled, when, at *Tancred's* side,
  Like him I stalk'd, and all his passions felt;
When charm'd by *Ismen*, through the forest wide,
  Bark'd in each plant a talking spirit dwelt!

† These lines were originally written thus:—

Hence, sure to charm, his early numbers flow,
  Though strong, yet sweet ———
Though faithful, sweet; though strong, of simple kind.
  Hence, with each theme, he bids the bosom glow,
While his warm lays an easy passage find,
Pour'd through each inmost nerve, and lull th' harmonious ear.

Or crop from Tiviots dale each
  And mourn on Yarrow's banks
Meantime, ye Pow'rs, that on the plains which bore
  The cordial youth, on LOTHIAN'S plains attend,
Where'er he dwell, on hill, or lowly muir,
  To him I lose, your kind protection lend,
And, touch'd with love like mine, preserve my absent
    friend.

VERSES

WRITTEN ON A PAPER WHICH CONTAINED A PIECE OF BRIDE-CAKE, GIVEN TO THE AUTHOR BY A LADY.

YE curious hands, that hid from vulgar eyes,
By search profane shall find this hallow'd cake,
With virtue's awe forbear the sacred prize,
Nor dare a theft for love and pity's sake!

This precious relick, form'd by magic pow'r,
Beneath the shepherd's haunted pillow laid,
Was meant by love to charm the silent hour,
The secret present of a matchless maid.

The Cyprian queen, at Hymen's fond request,
Each nice ingredient chose with happiest art;
Fears, sighs, and wishes of th' enamour'd breast,
And pains that please are mixt in every part.

With rosy hand the spicy fruit she brought,
From Paphian hills, and fair Cythera's isle;
And temper'd sweet with these the melting thought,
The kiss ambrosial and the yielding smile.

Ambiguous looks, that scorn and yet relent,
Denials mild, and firm unalter'd truth,
Reluctant pride, and amorous faint consent,
And meeting ardours and exulting youth.

Sleep, wayward God! hath sworn while these remain,
With flatt'ring dreams to dry his nightly tear,
And chearful hope, so oft invok'd in vain,
With fairy songs shall sooth his pensive ear.

If, bound by vows to friendship's gentle side,
And fond of soul, thou hop'st an equal grace,
If youth or maid thy joys and griefs divide,
O much entreated, leave this fatal place.

Sweet peace, who long hath shunn'd my plaintive day,
Consents at length to bring me short delight,
Thy careless steps may scare her doves away,
And grief with raven note usurp the night.

APPENDIX

Letter from William Collins

[Seward's *Supplement to the Anecdotes of Distinguished Persons*, p. 123]

TO DR. WILLIAM HAYES, PROFESSOR OF MUSIC, OXFORD.

Sir,

Mr. Blackstone, of Winchester, some time since informed me of the honour you had done me at Oxford last summer; for which I return you my sincere thanks. I have another more perfect copy of the Ode; which, had I known your obliging design, I would have communicated to you. Inform me by a line, if you should think one of my better judgement acceptable. In such case I could send you one written on a nobler subject; and which, tho' I have been persuaded to bring it forth in London, I think more calculated for an audience in the University. The subject is 'the Music of the Grecian Theatre'; in which I have, I hope naturally, introduced the various characters with which the chorus was concerned, as Oedipus, Medea, Electra, Orestes, etc.

The composition too is probably more correct, as I have chosen the ancient Tragedies for my models, and only copied the most affecting passages in them.

In the mean time, you would greatly oblige me by

sending the score of the last. If you can get it written, I will readily answer the expence. If you send it with a copy or two of the ode (as printed at Oxford) to Mr. Clarke, at Winchester, he will forward it to me here. I am, Sir,

With great respect,
Your obliged humble servant,
WILLIAM COLLINS.

Chichester, Sussex, November 8, 1750.

P.S. Mr. Clarke past some days here while Mr. Worgan was with me; from whose friendship, I hope, he will receive some advantage.

II

LETTER FROM JOSEPH WARTON TO THOMAS WARTON

[Wooll's *Memoirs of Dr. Joseph Warton*, p. 14]

DEAR TOM,

You will wonder to see my name in an advertisement next week, so I thought I would apprise you of it. The case was this. Collins met me in Surrey, at Guildford races, when I wrote out for him my odes, and he likewise communicated some of his to me; and being both in very high spirits, we took courage, resolved to join our forces, and to publish them immediately. I flatter myself that I shall lose no honour by this publication, because I believe these odes, as they now stand, are infinitely the best things I ever wrote. You will see a very pretty one of Collins's, on the Death of Colonel

Ross before Tournay. It is addressed to a lady who was Ross's intimate acquaintance, and who, by the way, is Miss Bett Goddard. Collins is not to publish the odes unless he gets ten guineas for them. I returned from Milford last night, where I left Collins with my mother and sister, and he sets out to-day for London. I must now tell you, that I have sent him your imitation of Horace's Blandusian Fountain, to be printed amongst ours, and which you shall own or not, as you think proper. I would not have done this without your consent, but because I think it very poetically and correctly done, and will get you honour. You will let me know what the Oxford critics say.

Adieu, dear Tom,

I am your most affectionate brother,

J. Warton.

III

Letter from Gilbert White to the 'Gentleman's Magazine'

Jan. 20, 1781.

Mr. Urban,

William Collins, the poet, I was intimately acquainted with, from the time that he came to reside at Oxford. He was the son of a tradesman in the city of Chichester, I think an hatter; and, being sent very young to Winchester-school, was soon distinguished for his early proficiency, and his turn for elegant composition. About the year 1740, he came off from that

seminary *first* upon roll,* and was entered a commoner of Queen's-college. There, no vacancy offering for New-college, he remained a year or two, and then was chosen demy of Magdalen-college; where, I think, he took a degree. As he brought with him, for so the whole turn of his conversation discovered, too high an opinion of his school acquisitions, and a sovereign contempt for all academic studies and discipline, he never looked with any complacency on his situation in the University, but was always complaining of the dulness of a college life. In short, he threw up his demyship, and, going to London, commenced a man of the town, spending his time in all the dissipation of Ranelagh, Vauxhall, and the playhouses; and was romantic enough to suppose that his superior abilities would draw the attention of the great world, by means of whom he was to make his fortune. In this pleasurable way of life he soon wasted his little property, and a considerable legacy left him by a maternal uncle, a colonel in the army, to whom the nephew made a visit in Flanders during the war. While on this tour he wrote several entertaining letters to his Oxford friends, some of which I saw. In London I met him often, and remember he lodged in a little house with a Miss Bundy, at the corner of King's-square-court, Soho, now a warehouse, for a long time together. When poverty overtook him, poor man, he had too much sensibility of temper to bear with his misfortunes, and so fell into a most deplorable state of mind. How

* Mr. Joseph Warton, now Dr. Warton, head-master of Winton-school, was at the same time *second* upon roll; and Mr. Mulso, now prebendary of the church of Winton, *third* upon roll. [G. M. 1781.]

he got down to Oxford, I do not know, but I myself saw him under Merton wall, in a very affecting situation, struggling, and conveyed by force, in the arms of two or three men, towards the parish of St. Clement, in which was a house that took in such unhappy objects: and I always understood, that not long after he died in confinement; but when, or where, or where he was buried, I never knew.

Thus was lost to the world this unfortunate person, in the prime of life, without availing himself of fine abilities, which, properly improved, must have raised him to the top of any profession, and have rendered him a blessing to his friends, and an ornament to his country!

Without books, or steadiness and resolution to consult them if he had been possessed of any, he was always planning schemes for elaborate publications, which were carried no farther than the drawing up proposals for subscriptions, some of which were published; and in particular, as far as I remember, one for 'A History of the darker Ages.'

He was passionately fond of music; good-natured and affable; warm in his friendships, and visionary in his pursuits; and, as long as I knew him, very temperate in his eating and drinking. He was of moderate stature, of a light and clear complexion, with grey eyes, so very weak at times as hardly to bear a candle in the room; and often raising within him apprehensions of blindness.

With an anecdote respecting him, while he was at Magdalen-college, I shall close my letter. It happened one afternoon, at a tea-visit, that several intelligent friends were assembled at his rooms to enjoy each

other's conversation, when in comes a member of a certain college,* as remarkable at that time for his brutal disposition as for his good scholarship; who, though he met with a circle of the most peaceable people in the world, was determined to quarrel; and, though no man said a word, lifted up his foot and kicked the tea-table, and all its contents, to the other side of the room. Our poet, tho' of a warm temper, was so confounded at the unexpected downfall, and so astonished at the unmerited insult, that he took no notice of the aggressor, but getting up from his chair calmly, he began picking up the slices of bread and butter, and the fragments of his china, repeating very mildly,

'Invenias etiam disjecti membra poetae.'

I am your very humble servant,
V.

IV

Letter from Mr. John Ragsdale to Mr. William Hymers, of Queen's College, Oxford

Hill Street, Richmond in Surrey, July 1783.

Sir,

Your favour of the 30th June I did not receive till yesterday. The person who has the care of my house in Bond Street, expecting me there every day, did not send it to Richmond, or I would have answered sooner. As you express a wish to know every particular, how-

* The translator of Polybius. [G. M.]

ever trifling, relating to Mr. William Collins, I will endeavour, so far as can be done by a letter, to satisfy you. There are many little anecdotes, which tell well enough in conversation, but would be tiresome for you to read, or me to write, so shall pass them over. I had formerly several scraps of his poetry, which were suddenly written on particular occasions. These I lent among our acquaintance, who were never civil enough to return them; and being then engaged in extensive business, I forgot to ask for them, and they are lost: all I have remaining of his are about twenty lines, which would require a little history to be understood, being written on trifling subjects. I have a few of his letters, the subjects of which are chiefly on business, but I think there are in them some flights, which strongly mark his character; for which reason I preserved them. There are so few of his intimates now living, that I believe I am the only one who can give a true account of his family and connexions. The principal part of what I write is from my own knowledge, or what I have heard from his nearest relations.

His father was not the manufacturer of hats, but the vender. He lived in a genteel style at Chichester; and, I think, filled the office of mayor more than once; he was pompous in his manner; but, at his death, he left his affairs rather embarrassed. Colonel Martin, his wife's brother, greatly assisted his family, and supported Mr. William Collins at the university, where he stood for a fellowship, which, to his great mortification, he lost, and which was his reason for quitting that place, at least that was his pretext. But he had other reasons: he was in arrears to his bookseller, his tailor, and other

tradesmen. But, I believe, a desire to partake of the dissipation and gaiety of London was his principal motive. Colonel Martin was at this time with his regiment; and Mr. Payne, a near relation, who had the management of the Colonel's affairs, had likewise a commission to supply the Collinses with small sums of money. The colonel was the more sparing in this order, having suffered considerably by Alderman Collins, who had formerly been his agent, and, forgetting that his wife's brother's cash was not his own, had applied it to his own use. When Mr. William Collins came from the university, he called on his cousin Payne, gaily dressed, and with a feather in his hat; at which his relation expressed surprise, and told him his appearance was by no means that of a young man who had not a single guinea he could call his own. This gave him great offence; but remembering his sole dependence for subsistence was in the power of Mr. Payne, he concealed his resentment; yet could not refrain from speaking freely behind his back, and saying 'he thought him a d——d dull fellow;' though, indeed, this was an epithet he was pleased to bestow on every one who did not think as he would have them. His frequent demands for a supply obliged Mr. Payne to tell him he must pursue some other line of life, for he was sure Colonel Martin would be displeased with him for having done so much. This resource being stopped, forced him to set about some work, of which his 'History of the Revival of Learning' was the first; and for which he printed proposals (one of which I have), and took the first subscription money from many of his particular friends: the work was begun, but soon stood still.

Both Dr. Johnson and Mr. Langhorne are mistaken when they say, the 'Translation of Aristotle' was never begun: I know the contrary, for some progress was made in both, but most in the latter. From the freedom subsisting between us, we took the liberty of saying anything to each other. I one day reproached him with idleness; when, to convince me my censure was unjust, he showed me many sheets of his 'Translation of Aristotle,' which he said he had so fully employed himself about, as to prevent him calling on many of his friends so frequently as he used to do. Soon after this he engaged with Mr. Manby, a bookseller on Ludgate Hill, to furnish him with some Lives for the Biographia Britannica, which Manby was then publishing. He showed me some of the lives in embryo; but I do not recollect that any of them came to perfection. To raise a present subsistence he set about writing his odes; and, having a general invitation to my house, he frequently passed whole days there, which he employed in writing them, and as frequently burning what he had written, after reading them to me: many of them, which pleased me, I struggled to preserve, but without effect; for, pretending he would alter them, he got them from me, and thrust them into the fire. He was an acceptable companion everywhere; and, among the gentlemen who loved him for a genius, I may reckon the Doctors Armstrong, Barrowby, and Hill, Messrs. Quin, Garrick, and Foote, who frequently took his opinion on their pieces before they were seen by the public. He was particularly noticed by the geniuses who frequented the Bedford and Slaughter's Coffee Houses From his knowledge of Garrick he had

the liberty of the scenes and green-room, where he made diverting observations on the vanity and false consequence of that class of people; and his manner of relating them to his particular friends was extremely entertaining. In this manner he lived, with and upon his friends, until the death of Colonel Martin, who left what fortune he died possessed of unto him and his two sisters. I fear I cannot be certain as to dates, but believe he left the university in the year 43. Some circumstances I recollect, make me almost certain he was in London that year; but I will not be so certain of the time he died, which I did not hear of till long after it happened. When his health and faculties began to decline, he went to France, and after to Bath, in hope his health might be restored, but without success. I never saw him after his sister removed him from M'Donald's madhouse at Chelsea to Chichester, where he soon sunk into a deplorable state of idiotism, which, when I was told, shocked me exceedingly; and, even now, the remembrance of a man for whom I had a particular friendship, and in whose company I have passed so many pleasant happy hours, gives me a severe shock. Since it is in consequence of your own request, Sir, that I write this long farrago, I expect you will overlook all inaccuracies.

I am, Sir,

Your very humble Servant,

JOHN RAGSDALE.

Mr. William Hymers, Queen's College, Oxford.

V

Letter from Thomas Warton to 'The Reaper'

I often saw Collins in London in 1750. This was before his illness. He then told me of his intended history of the Revival of Learning, and proposed a scheme of a review, to be called the Clarendon Review, and to be printed at the University press, under the conduct and authority of the University. About Easter, the next year, I was in London; when, being given over, and supposed to be dying, he desired to see me, that he might take his last leave of me; but he grew better, and in the summer he sent me a letter on some private business, which I have now by me, dated Chichester, June 9, 1751, written in a fine hand, and without the least symptom of a disordered or debilitated understanding. In 1754, he came to Oxford for change of air and amusement, where he stayed a month; I saw him frequently, but he was so weak and low, that he could not bear conversation. Once he walked from his lodgings, opposite Christ-Church, to Trinity-College, but supported by his servant. The same year, in September, I and my brother visited him at Chichester, where he lived in the cathedral cloisters, with his sister. The first day he was in high spirits at intervals, but exerted himself so much that he could not see us the second. Here he showed us an Ode to Mr. John Home, on his leaving England for Scotland, in the octave stanza, very long, and beginning,

Home, thou return'st from Thames!

I remember there was a beautiful description of the spectre of a man drowned in the night, or, in the language of the old Scotch superstitions—seized by the angry spirit of the waters, appearing to his wife with pale blue cheek, &c. Mr. Home has no copy of it. He also showed us another ode, of two or three four-lined stanzas, called the Bell of Arragon; on a tradition that, anciently, just before a king of Spain died, the great bell of the cathedral of Sarragossa, in Arragon, tolled spontaneously. It began thus:

> The bell of Arragon, they say,
> Spontaneous speaks the fatal day, &c.

Soon afterwards were these lines:

> Whatever dark aerial power,
> Commission'd, haunts the gloomy tower.

The last stanza consisted of a moral transition to his own death and knell, which he called 'some simpler bell.' I have seen all his odes already published in his own hand-writing: they had the marks of repeated correction: he was perpetually changing his epithets. I had lately his first manuscript of the Ode on the Death of Colonel Ross, with many interlineations and alterations.

The lady to whom this Ode is addressed was Miss Elizabeth Goddard, who then lived at or near Harting, in Sussex. In the first stanza, my manuscript has 'sunk in grief,' for 'stained with blood.' The fourth stanza stood thus:—

> Ev'n now, regardful of his doom,
> Applauding honour haunts his tomb,
> With shadowy trophies crown'd:

While freedom's form beside her roves,
Majestic, through the twilight groves,
And calls her heroes round.

The sixth stanza had 'untaught' in the first line, instead of 'unknown.' The present seventh and eighth stanzas were not in the manuscript. In the ninth stanza, instead of, 'If weak to soothe so soft a heart,' the reading was, 'If drawn with all a lover's art.' Many variations I have forgotten. Dr. Warton, my brother, has a few fragments of some other odes, but too loose and imperfect for publication, yet containing traces of high imagery. In the Ode to Pity, the idea of a Temple of Pity, of its situation, construction, and groups of painting with which its walls were decorated, was borrowed from a poem, now lost, entitled the Temple of Pity, written by my brother, while he and Collins were school-fellows at Winchester College.

In illustration of what Dr. Johnson has related, that during his last malady he was a great reader of the Bible, I am favoured with the following anecdote from the Reverend Mr. Shenton, Vicar of St. Andrew's, at Chichester, by whom Collins was buried: 'Walking in my vicarial garden one Sunday evening, during Collins's last illness, I heard a female (the servant, I suppose) reading the Bible in his chamber. Mr. Collins had been accustomed to rave much, and to make great moanings; but while she was reading, or rather attempting to read, he was not only silent but attentive likewise, correcting her mistakes, which indeed were very frequent, through the whole of the twenty-seventh

chapter of Genesis.' I have just been informed, from undoubted authority, that Collins had finished a Preliminary Dissertation to be prefixed to his History of the Restoration of Learning, and that it was written with great judgment, precision, and knowledge of the subject.

T. W.

INDEX OF FIRST LINES

OXFORD: HORACE HART
PRINTER TO THE UNIVERSITY